

Crusading and Chronicle Writing on the Medieval Baltic Frontier

A Companion to the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia

Edited by

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Preface

The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia was written by a missionary priest to record the history of the crusades to Livonia and Estonia (that is, present day Latvia and Estonia) in around 1186–1227. Produced in the late 1220s in ‘the praise of our Lord Jesus Christ who wishes His faith and His name to be carried to all nations’ and with the goal to record ‘the many and glorious things [that] happened in Livonia at the time the heathen were converted to the faith of Jesus Christ’,¹ the chronicle offers one of the most vivid examples of the crusading ideology in practice in the early thirteenth century, a period when it became tightly integrated in the political and religious culture of Europe. This period saw a new rise and consolidation of the crusading ideology and institutions, a revival in campaigning in the Holy Land and the Iberian Peninsula, as well as the movement’s significant territorial expansion. Now it was also appropriated for the conquest and conversion of the northern frontiers of Europe or for the persecution of the heretics at the heart of the continent.

Henry’s chronicle is designed as a founding narrative of the new bishopric, Riga, aiming at establishing its legitimacy and identity. The narrative begins with the arrival of Meinhard, an Augustinian monk, from Saxony to Livonia in the 1180s. The chronicle presents Meinhard’s debated ‘peaceful mission’ and his emergence as the first bishop of Üxküľ (Latv. Ikšķile) (r. 1186–96), establishing a suffrage of the archbishopric of Hamburg-Bremen. Then it records the first crusade to Livonia in 1198, led by the next bishop of Üxküľ, Berthold (r. 1196–98), and his martyrdom during the same expedition. Henry goes on to report the conquest and conversion of the Livs and Lettgallians during the early years of the reign of Bishop Albert (r. 1199–1229), the founding of Riga (which became the new see and a base for the Christians in this region), and the start of regular crusading. The chronicle continues with the campaigns and missions to Estonia that started in around 1208 and that take up more than two thirds of the text. The narrative ends with the victorious campaign to the islands of Moon (Est. Muhu) and Ösel (Est. Saaremaa) in 1227, after which the whole Estonian territory was subjugated under the Church of Riga, the Order of the Sword Brethren and the Danish king.

¹ HCL XXIX.9, p. 215; Brundage, p. 237.

The chronicle seems to have been written between 1224 and 1227 and its author was likely a parish and missionary priest, Henry (*Henricus* or *Heinricus*), who had arrived from Saxony to Livonia around 1205 and who is mentioned several times in the text.² In any case, the author of the chronicle does not belong to the circles of highly educated and high-ranking clergymen. If Henry was indeed the author of the chronicle, then he had been an active partaker in the events described: he had lived close to the mission and warfare in the lands of the Livs and Lettgallians, had been on missions to Estonia and taken part in crusading as a chaplain. This has led some scholars even to treat the chronicle as an autobiography.³ Next to his own experiences, Henry could also have used the testimonies of fellow missionaries and crusaders; it is rhetoric, but not only mere rhetoric, when he claims ‘Nothing has been put in this account except what we have seen almost entirely with our own eyes. What we have not seen with our eyes, we have learned from those who saw it and who were there.’⁴ Thus, on the one hand, the chronicle presents the partial perspective of a committed participant. On the other hand, it offers a rare opportunity to gain insight into the crusading and missionary activities, as well as the symbolic universe of conquest, conversion and cultural (ex)change – aspects of the chronicle that have been emphasized, especially recently, and that have elevated Henry’s text to a rather keen level of interest amongst crusading scholars.

Step by step, it has become one of the most widely read and acknowledged frontier crusading and missionary chronicles. Although it was printed as early as 1740, a scholarly edition of the chronicle appeared only in 1954. Thus, it has only been during the recent decades that the chronicle has come into the focus of historians, archaeologists, linguists, theologians, anthropologists, and so on. In addition, the number of its translations has been growing steadily, by now also making it one of the most translated medieval crusading chronicles, that has been published in eight languages in total. (For details, see the Bibliography at the end of this volume.)

² See HCL XI.7, p. 55; XII.6, p. 62; XVI.3, p. 107; XVII.6, p. 114; XXIV.1–2, pp. 169–71. In addition, scholars have suggested that Henry also took part in the Lateran Council (1215), in Bishop Albert’s voyage to Germany in 1222–24, and acted as an interpreter for the papal legate to the region, William of Modena, in 1225–26. It has also been supposed that Henry was born in around 1187–88 in Saxony, near Magdeburg, educated at the monastery school at Segeberg and that he thereafter, in around 1205, came to Riga with Bishop Albert and was ordained a parish priest in 1208. It is known that a priest of that name died some time after the year 1259. For an overview, see Albert Bauer, ‘Einleitung,’ in *Heinrici Chronicon Livoniae. Editio altera*, ed. Leonid Arbusow and Albert Bauer (Hanover, 1955), pp. V–LIV.

³ Paul Johansen, ‘Die Chronik als Biographie: Heinrich von Lettlands Lebensgang und Weltanschauung,’ *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, n.s. 1 (1953), 1–24.

⁴ HCL XXIX.9, p. 215; Brundage, pp. 237–8.

As a crusading chronicle from the European frontier, Henry's chronicle offers many opportunities to test and broaden the new approaches and key concepts brought along by recent developments in medieval studies. Presenting a fairly coherent case where crusading practices and ideology were applied for around 30 years campaigning in a peripheral region, it offers illuminating material for studying the new pluralist definition of crusading,⁵ as well as the relationship between the frontier and core areas of Europe. On a broader scale, the chronicle, which is dominated by the theme of 'the enlargement of faith among the pagans',⁶ is well suited for discussing the formation of new medieval European identities.⁷ Moreover, even today its legacy is especially visible among the young nations in Eastern and Eastern-Central Europe. Writers like Henry, who were constructing their histories at the edges of the known world, had to integrate local historiography into the universal schemes and local geography into the universal Christian space.⁸ This task also included the construction of the 'otherness' of indigenous 'pagan peoples' which has become yet another prominent object of study. Considering the range and topicality of these issues, it is no surprise that the past ten years has produced a significant amount of new international research into the chronicle, which has also been enlivened by the bringing together of the previously separated Eastern and Western European academic traditions, and the general rise of interest in the medieval Baltic region.⁹

⁵ See, for instance, Norman Housley, *Contesting the Crusades* (Oxford, 2006); *Palgrave Advances in the Crusades*, ed. Helen Nicholson (Houndmills, 2005); Christopher Tyerman, *God's War: A New History of the Crusades* (London, 2006); Jonathan Riley-Smith, *What Were the Crusades?*, 4th edn (Houndmills, 2009).

⁶ See Leonid Arbusow, 'Das entlehnte Sprachgut in Heinrichs "Chronicon Livoniae". Ein Beitrag zur Sprache mittelalterlicher Chronistik', *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 8 (1951), 100–53 (here 127–9).

⁷ See, for instance, *Medieval Frontier Societies*, ed. Robert Bartlett and Angus Mackay (Oxford, 1989); Robert Bartlett, *The Making of Europe: Conquest, Colonization and Cultural Change, 950–1350* (London, 1993); Patrick Geary, *The Myth of Nations: The Medieval Origins of Nations* (Princeton, 2002); *Medieval Frontiers: Concepts and Practices*, ed. David Abulafia and Nora Berend (Aldershot, 2002).

⁸ Cf. *The Making of Christian Myths in the Periphery of Latin Christendom*, ed. Lars Boje Mortensen (Copenhagen, 2006).

⁹ See first of all the two volumes edited by Alan V. Murray: *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier, 1150–1500*, ed. Alan V. Murray (Aldershot, 2001); *The Clash of Cultures on the Medieval Baltic Frontier*, ed. Alan V. Murray (Farnham, 2009); as well as the publications of the 'Culture Clash or Compromise' (1996–2005) project that was led by Nils Blomkvist at the Gotland University College.

However, as the studies have been scattered around various national historiographical traditions, smaller publications and languages, this has created a need to synthesize and coherently present the current state of research on Henry of Livonia in English for an international professional audience. Inspired by this necessity, the Centre for Medieval Studies of Tallinn University initiated and hosted a conference specifically devoted to the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia. Sixteen papers presented there on 22–24 May 2008 are included in this volume, as well as two additional ones. The conference, entitled ‘Crusading and Chronicle Writing on the Medieval Baltic Frontier: The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia’, was organized jointly by the Centre for Medieval Studies of Tallinn University, the Nordic Centre for Medieval Studies (with branches in Bergen, Odense, Gothenburg and Helsinki) and the Department of Church History of the University of Copenhagen.

Based on the rich materials of the conference, the present volume was designed to provide a multi-sided and multi-disciplinary companion to the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia, without pretending, nevertheless, to be a comprehensive study of all aspects of the chronicle. The volume is divided into three parts. They are preceded by a general introduction to the life and work of Henry by James Brundage, who is not only an eminent medievalist, but also the English translator of Henry’s chronicle. As Brundage points out, this is not an easy task, due to the fact that ‘virtually everything we know (or think we know) about Henry of Livonia, comes from his chronicle’. He also addresses the paradoxes of the frontier mission, such as the problems related to forced conversion and the depictions according to which Henry and other priests quite a few times also joined in the combat.

The first part of the volume, ‘Representations’, brings into focus the imaginary sphere of the chronicle – the various images brought into existence by the amalgamation of crusading and missionary ideology and the frontier experience: the representations of the environment, nations, languages, religious confrontations, and so on. Often they are also closely bound to the conceptualization of ‘otherness’. A good introduction into this topic is Jüri Kivimäe’s analysis of Henry’s constructions of peoples. Departing from the observation that the chronicle contains hundreds of names for different peoples and tribes, Kivimäe discusses Henry’s terminology for and representation of different Baltic peoples (the Livs, Lettgallians, Estonians, and others) and the Germans, their allies and rivals (the Scandinavians, Russians, Lithuanians). While Kivimäe (and other contributors) briefly discusses Henry’s own language skills, Alan V. Murray focuses entirely on the role of orality and indigenous languages in this text. By examining Henry’s linguistic knowledge and his activity as an interpreter, Murray aims at a better understanding of how the process of

conversion functioned on the linguistic level. Torben K. Nielsen's chapter adds another important aspect to this picture, namely the conceptualization of space. Focusing on Henry's representation of woods and wilderness, Nielsen examines how the chronicle stages the wilderness of the local space in ways that would underline the 'otherness' of this non-Christian landscape. As one can expect from a missionary and crusading chronicle, embodiment and verbalization also have a crucial role in Henry's representational universe. Marek Tamm analyses Henry's poetics of death, arguing that it has a key rhetorical and ideological function in the narrative and the chronicle's justification of crusading. Tamm also offers a typology of the ways of dying and mortuary rituals in the chronicle, and examines the two extremes of dying: miraculous death and martyrdom. Carsten Selch Jensen's chapter, in turn, looks at the staging of religious rivalry through the representations of sermons. Jensen treats them as verbal confrontations between the missionary preachers of the Church of Riga (that is, the central protagonists of the chronicle), the indigenous people and the rival Danish missionaries, showing how they develop into key elements of the chronicle.

This section of the volume also discusses the tools of representation, such as narrative techniques and rhetorical devices used in the chronicle. We believe it is especially important to take into consideration the representational character of the chronicle and to stress the difference between crusading as a lived experience and crusading as a written representation. Marcus Bull has recently pointed out that: '[t]he relationship between the doing of crusading and the writing of crusades, the dynamic between lived sequential experience and the narrativizing (sometimes near-simultaneous) of that experience, is something that scholars perhaps need to investigate more fully.'¹⁰ There is one representational feature of Henry's chronicle that has gained a lot of attention, namely the extraordinary abundance of citations from the Bible and other religious books (around 1,100 loans in total). The chapter by Jaan Undusk challenges the earlier view that Henry cites unintentionally and due to his lack of linguistic competence. In Undusk's view, it is the constant contact with the Holy Scripture that is of primary importance for Henry. Moreover, the analysis of the semantics and the syntax of citations shows that Henry is also brilliant in typology; that is, in finding correspondences between the profane events taking place in Livonia and the eternal types of the Sacred History. He also links Henry's use of the Bible to the eager appropriation of biblical citations (especially from the First Book of the Maccabees) in the crusading discourse. Christopher Tyerman examines Henry's relationship to contemporary crusading ideology and the

¹⁰ Marcus Bull, 'Views of Muslims and of Jerusalem in Miracle Stories, c. 1000–c. 1200: Reflections on the Study of First Crusaders' Motivations', in *The Experience of Crusading*, ed. Marcus Bull et al., 2 vols (Cambridge, 2003), vol. 2, pp. 13–38 (here 15).

ways in which he fashions it to suit his local purposes in detail. This chapter also helps to contextualize Henry's novelty in the Nordic chronicle tradition: unlike Saxo Grammaticus (c. 1150–1220) or Helmold of Bosau (c. 1120–after 1177) (whose chronicles recorded the conquest and conversion of the Western Slavs) and much more than Arnold of Lübeck (c. 1150–1211/14) (a chapter from his work is, next to Henry, the only narrative source about the Livonian crusade), Henry's chronicle is shot through with elements of crusade ideology (his use of remission of sins, canon law, pilgrimage language, papal authority, references to the Holy Land and the cult of the Virgin, and so on).

The first part of the volume is followed by studies into the 'Practices', which examine the chronicle's reflections of the diplomatic, religious and military practices of the Christianization and colonization processes in medieval Livonia. In this part, Henry's testimony of crusading practices is discussed in comparison with other textual reports, as well as with the archaeological evidence. Iben Fonnesberg-Schmidt analyses the relations between Riga and Rome. The intensive use of the papal curia is also something that is typical of the times – it became customary for missionary ventures only around the early thirteenth century. Henry wished to present the relations between Riga and Rome as strong and symbiotic, and epistolary evidence supports his description of the close interaction. However, it was only Pope Honorius III (r. 1216–27) who fully embraced the Baltic crusades, while Innocent III (r. 1198–1216) considered it first of all as a missionary enterprise. Next to the authorization from Rome, there were also other ways of granting meaning to the crusading and mission in faraway lands, and one of the best and also oft-analysed examples of this is Henry's presentation of the *ludus magnus* in Riga in 1204, which reminds us of the role of performative practices in activating the dialogue with the sacred past. Nils Holger Petersen offers a new perspective on this event, which has been treated as 'liturgical drama', in the light of recent scholarship on medieval performances. The *ludus magnus* may have been anything from a large-scale enactment of biblical wars to a more traditional Latin liturgical sung play text, but in any case it relates to Henry's justifying the violent conversion of the pagans by using Old Testament models.

In this section, special attention is paid to Henry's depictions of military practices, which take up a large portion of the chronicle. For analysing them, the help of archaeological research is particularly relevant. The topic is introduced by Kurt Villads Jensen's overview of military revolution around 1200 that helps to contextualize the chronicle's depictions of warfare. Villads Jensen also stresses that we should distinguish between different levels: between the direct and psychological uses of violence and the ideological and theological framing of warfare. Only then can we combine the elements into a coherent

narrative about warfare. His chapter is followed by more concrete analyses. As put by Ain Mäesalu, Henry provides valuable information for studying the military events, weapons and military technology, the tactics of field battles and the siege and defence of hillforts. Mäesalu focuses on mechanical artillery (crossbows and stone-throwing machines), about which Henry seems to have been especially fascinated, and compares the chronicle's depictions to the data gleaned from archaeological excavations and the experiments carried out with reconstructed machines. In broad terms, Henry's information on these weapons corresponds fairly well with the archaeological evidence. Valter Lang and Heiki Valk give the archaeological reading of Henry's chronicle a methodological slant, analysing how the text can be used in archaeological research at different levels. This chapter also offers selected examples based on recent case studies. For example, Henry's information about the strongholds correlates closely with the archaeological record – most of the finds of crossbow bolts come from strongholds, the besieging or use of which were mentioned by him. But the authors also give examples of cases where Henry's report about the course of campaigning cannot be trusted. Marika Mägi, in turn, offers a provoking reinterpretation of one Estonian tribe, the Öselians' role by comparing Henry's text with archaeological data. Indeed, as she points out, since other written sources about thirteenth-century Livonia and Estonia are scarce, archaeology provides the almost only alternative contemporary source. Henry represents the Öselians as an underdeveloped society of 'others' that relies on looting raids and has weak or no central power. Mägi presents several contrasting hypotheses: the Öselians' military actions suggest ambitions to control international trade, their social stratification resembled that of Viking-Age Scandinavia and they played an active role in early thirteenth-century politics.

The volume concludes with a section on the 'Appropriations', which maps the reception history and the impact of the chronicle: the dynamics of the medieval, early modern and modern national uses and abuses of the text. Henry's text, as it is known today, is a modern reconstruction – neither an original of the chronicle nor any direct copy of it survives today. A total of 16 manuscript copies of Henry's text from the fourteenth to the eighteenth centuries are known, but not all of them contain the whole text of the chronicle. It is also important to note that, during the Middle Ages, there are just a few signs of reading and utilization of the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia, and also only one medieval copy of the work has been preserved. The *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* (written around the 1290s), a vernacular chivalric narrative about Livonian history representing the tradition of the Teutonic Order, was in the Middle Ages more influential in creating the image of the past than Henry's chronicle (that focuses on the priority of the bishop of Riga). The reasons behind the meagre

popularity of Henry in the Middle Ages are analysed by Anti Selart. From the second half of the thirteenth century onwards, the history of Livonia was shaped by the conflict over hegemony between the Teutonic Order and the archbishop of Riga. In the rivals 'struggle for history', however, Henry's chronicle appears to have been unusable – for the Order, it was too strong an apology for the Church of Riga, and for the bishopric, it still retouched the contradictions of the bishop and the Sword Brethren. In addition, the question of who held priority during the conquest of the land appears to have been chiefly a legal conflict in which charters were of greater significance than chronicles. The knowledge and utilization of Henry's work only emerged in the sixteenth century, a time of new political tensions in Northern and Eastern Europe. However, then too Henry and his crusading ethos quickly became outdated; competing chronicles made the Livonian history older and charters provided a more secure support in legal discussions. Stefan Donecker discusses the faint reception of Henry's chronicle in early modern scholarship from humanists to the Gruber edition of 1740. Even though most manuscripts of the chronicle were written during this period, thereby indicating that scholars knew Henry, they made hardly any use of the chronicle or used it scantily. In seeking explanations to this paradox, Donecker points to several aspects: his text may have been unavailable, the early modern chroniclers were preoccupied with the Livonian War and its aftermath, and the work of a medieval Catholic priest (that presents an apology for a medieval Catholic bishop) was not attractive for Protestant humanists. Donecker also discusses the background of the Gruber edition, but it is the chapter by Tiina Kala that focuses on the chronicle's printed editions from Gruber to the present, and also gives an overview of the 16 manuscript copies of the chronicle. As she points out, although Henry's chronicle is the oldest narrative source for Livonian history, it is relatively young in a historiographical sense. Since the rise of source criticism in the mid-nineteenth-century, the supposedly 'correct' text of the chronicle (that is, as close as possible to the lost original) has been the goal of scientific editions and has resulted in the canonization of a certain form of the reconstruction, pushing aside everything that does not conform to it. In addition to looking at how general tendencies in the historical discipline are reflected in different editions, Kala also relates the printed editions' history to the political and ideological uses of Henry's chronicle: for instance, by linking the nineteenth-century translations to the rise of nationalisms. Indeed, since the late nineteenth century, the chronicle has been turned into a cornerstone of Estonian and Latvian national historiography and become a never-ending source for fiction writing and various cultural performances. Linda Kaljundi, with the collaboration of Kaspars Kļaviņš, analyses the dialogue between Henry's chronicle and national cultural memories, focusing on the Estonian and

Latvian, and to a lesser extent the Baltic German, tradition. The chapter also considers the cultural roots of nationalism, briefly discussing the Enlightenment view of the Livonian Middle Ages. The Estonian and Latvian appropriations of Henry are vivid examples of hybrid cultural traditions: nationalist readings of the chronicle have included both acceptance of and resistance to this text; the result is full of anxiety, negation and displacement. The same holds for the relationship to its author: on the one hand, 'the father' of Latvian and Estonian history, on the other hand, a tyrant and a stranger, whose language and ways they do not understand, but whom their young and fragile national ego has to accept and adapt, as well as continuously fight against and falsify.

Marek Tamm, Linda Kaljundi and Carsten Selch Jensen
Tallinn, October 2010

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A Note on Names

The historical names of places, regions and physical features (rivers, lakes, and so on) in the eastern Baltic region have undergone several changes from the Middle Ages to nowadays. In this book we follow the tradition elaborated by Alan V. Murray in his two edited collections on the medieval Baltic frontier (*Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier, 1150–1500*, 2001, and *The Clash of Cultures on the Medieval Baltic Frontier*, 2009, both published by Ashgate). Thus, where they exist, English forms have been used for places and physical features; otherwise names are mostly given in the German language that dominated in the areas in question at that time. Where these forms differ from the modern names of the places in question, the corresponding forms in Estonian (Est.), Latvian (Latv.) or Russian (Russ.) are given in parentheses on their first occurrence in every chapter.

Concerning the names of medieval countries and regions, we adopted English forms where these exist, or Latin (or slightly anglicized Latin) forms – for example, Vironia, rather than Wierland (German) or Virumaa (Estonian). A comparative table of different modern equivalents of the most important place names and regional names is given on page 000.

In the case of personal names, names of individuals from the countries of northern Europe (the Baltic countries, Germany, Russia and Scandinavia) are usually given in the modern forms of their own languages. For individuals originating elsewhere, the forms used are those judged to be most familiar to English-speaking readers. In the quotations from the English translation of the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia, we have preserved the forms of the names given by the translator, James A. Brundage.

Modern Equivalents of Place Names and Regional Names

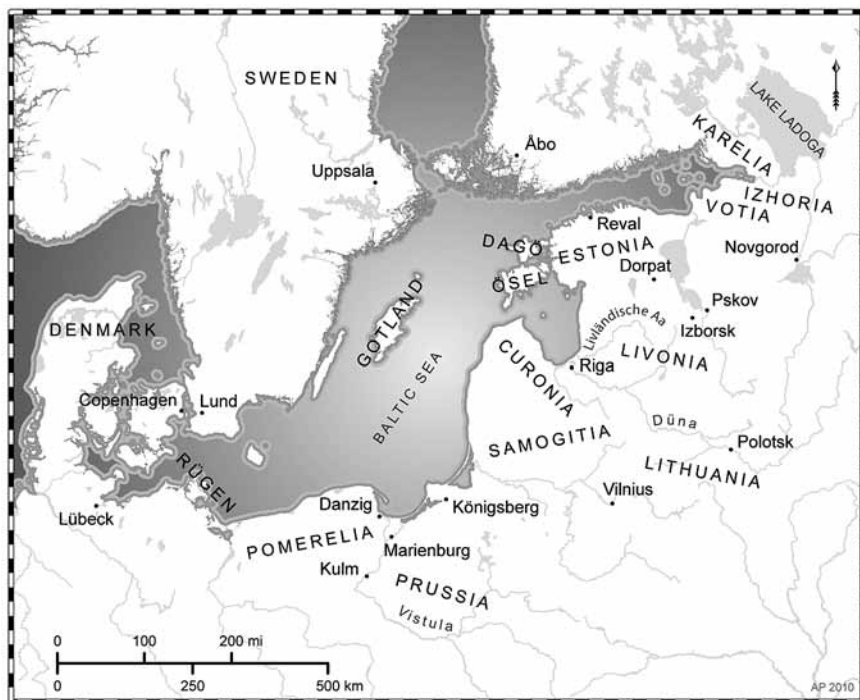
English/German	Estonian	Latvian
Curonia (Ger. Kurland)		Kurzeme
Dagö (Ger.)	Hiiumaa	
Dorpat (Ger.)	Tartu	
Düna (Ger.) ¹	Väina	Daugava
Dünamünde (Ger.)		Daugavgrīva
(River) Embach (Ger.)	Emajõgi	
Fellin (Ger.)	Viljandi	
Gerzike (Ger.)		Jersika
Harria (Ger. Harrien)	Harjumaa	
Holme (Ger.)		Mārtiņšala
Jerwia (Ger. Jerwen)	Järvamaa	
Kokenhusen (Ger.)		Koknese
Leal (Ger.)	Lihula	
Lennewarden (Ger.)		Lielvārde
Leole (Ger.)	Lõhavere	
(River) Livonian Aa	Koiva	Gauja
(Ger. Livländische Aa)		
Mesoten (Ger.)		Mežotne
Moon (Ger.)	Muhu	
Odenpäh (Ger.)	Otepää	
Ösel (Ger.)	Saaremaa	
Papendorf (Ger.)		Rubene
(Lake) Peipus ²	Peipsi järv	
Peude (Ger.)	Pöide	
Reval (Ger.)	Tallinn	
Riga (Ger.)		Rīga
Saccala	Sakala	
Semgallia (Ger. Semgallien)		Zemgale

Sontagana (Ger.)	Soontagana	
Treiden (Ger.)		Turaida
Ugaunia (Ger. Ugaunien)	Ugandi	
Üxküll (Ger.)		Ikšķile
Vironia (Ger. Wierland)	Virumaa	
Wolde (Ger.)	Valjala	
Warbola (Ger.)	Varbola	
Wenden (Ger.)	Võnnu	Cēsis

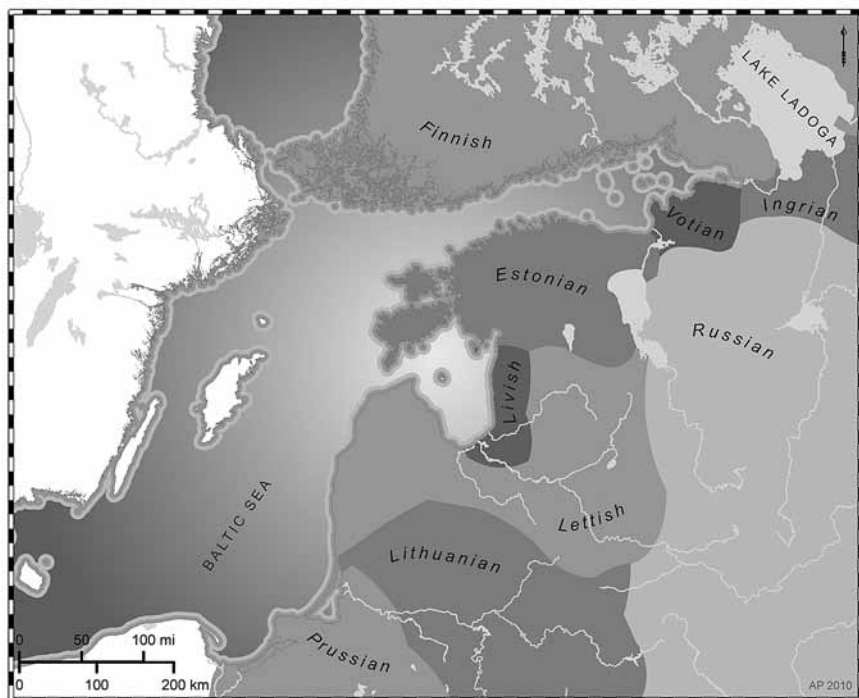
Notes: 1. Russian Dvina. 2. Russian Chudskoe ozero.

List of Abbreviations

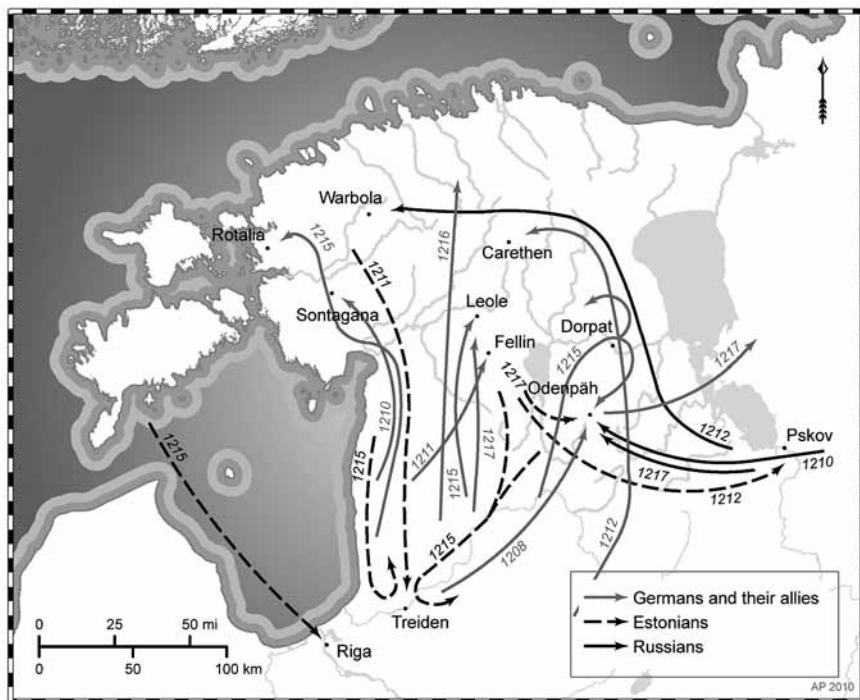
Brundage	<i>The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia</i> , trans. James A. Brundage (Madison, 1961; repr. with a new introduction, notes and bibliography, New York and Chichester, 2003)
CCBF	<i>Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier 1150–1500</i> , ed. Alan V. Murray (Aldershot, 2001)
CCMBF	<i>The Clash of Cultures on the Medieval Baltic Frontier</i> , ed. Alan V. Murray (Farnham and Burlington, 2009)
DD	<i>Diplomatarium Danicum</i> , ed. Niels Skym Nielsen et al. (Copenhagen, 1957–)
Est.	Estonian
Ger.	German
HCL	<i>Heinrici Chronicon Livoniae</i> , ed. Leonid Arbusow and Albert Bauer, MGH rer. Germ. in usum scholarum ex separatim editi (Hanover, 1955)
MGH	
JBS	<i>Journal of Baltic Studies</i>
Latv.	Latvian
LUB	<i>Liv-, Esth- und Curländisches Urkundenbuch</i> , ed. Friedrich Georg von Bunge et al., 12 vols in 2 series (Reval, 1853–1914)
MGH rer. Germ.	<i>Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarium</i>
MGH SS	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores in folio</i> (Hanover, 1826–)
PL	<i>Patrologia Cursus Completus, Series Latina</i> , ed. Jacques-Paul Migne, 221 vols (Paris, 1844–64)
Russ.	Russian
ZfO	<i>Zeitschrift für Ostforschung</i> (later <i>Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung</i>)



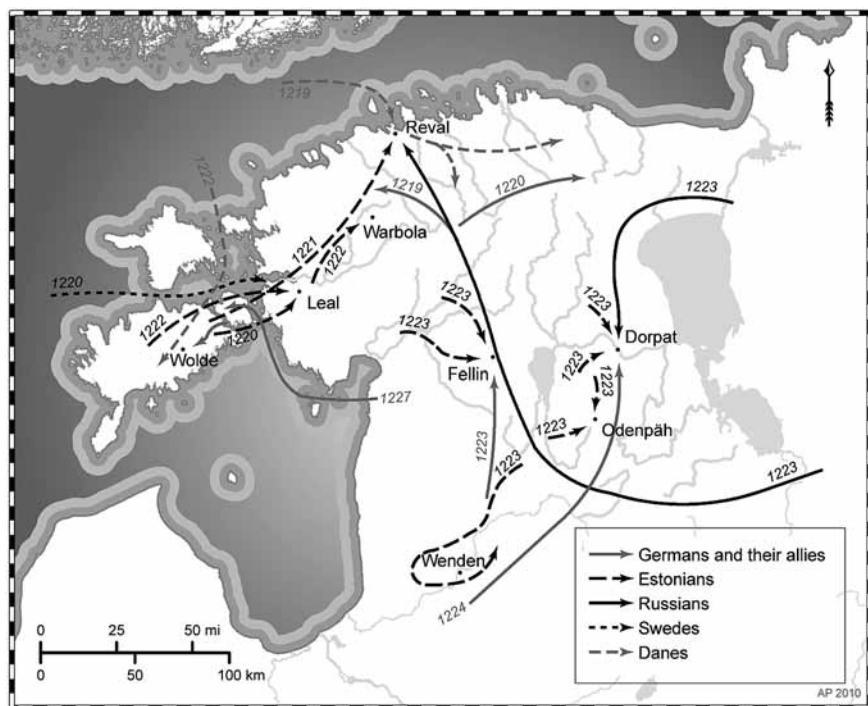
Map 1 Medieval Baltic Region



Map 2 Languages of the Eastern Baltic Lands c. 1200 (simplified)



Map 3 Main campaigns in Livonia according to Henry's Chronicle, 1208–17



Map 4 Main campaigns in Livonia according to Henry's Chronicle, 1218–27

Introduction: Henry of Livonia, The Writer and His Chronicle

James A. Brundage

Let me begin by outlining what we know, or can reasonably infer, about who Henry of Livonia was, the circumstances that led him to write the *Chronicon Livoniae*, and a few of his chronicle's more intriguing characteristics. I shall then examine several puzzling aspects of Henry's chronicle and the problems that they raise.

Virtually everything we know (or think we know) about Henry of Livonia comes from his chronicle. Early students of his work speculated that its author may have been a Lettish priest educated in Germany, since at one point he describes himself as Henricus de Lettis.¹ In more recent times, however, scholars have increasingly concluded that this is unlikely.² For one thing, Henry uses verbs and pronouns in the first person plural when he refers to Germans, but never does so when he writes about converts to Christianity among the indigenous Baltic peoples. Similarly, when he refers to Christians from other regions, such as Danes and Russians, he does so in the third person.³ Consequently most scholars now believe that Henricus de Lettis was a German priest who worked among Lettish parishioners, not himself of Lettish origin.⁴ He was probably born sometime in the 1180s in Saxony, perhaps in the vicinity of Magdeburg, possibly in Poppendorf, since he named his Livonian parish

¹ HCL XVI.3, p. 107.

² Among others, Alfreds Bilmanis, *A History of Latvia* (Princeton, 1951), p. 55; Arnolds Spekke, *History of Latvia: An Outline* (Stockholm, 1951), p. 129; Wilhelm Arndt, in MGH SS 23, pp. 236–8.

³ Thus, for example, HCL XXIII.7 and 9, pp. 161–2, 165–7. Vilis Bīlkins, 'Die Autoren der Kreuzzugszeit und das deutsche Milieu Livlands und Preussens', *Acta Baltica* 14 (1975), 231–54 (here 235–44); Norbert Angermann, 'Die mittelalterliche Chronistik', in *Geschichte der deutschbaltischen Geschichtsschreibung*, ed. Georg von Rauch (Cologne and Vienna, 1986), pp. 3–20 (here 8); Robert Holtzmann, 'Studien zu Heinrich von Lettland', *Neues Archiv der Gesellschaft für ältere Deutsche Geschichtskunde* 43 (1920), 159–212 (here 161–78).

⁴ Bīlkins, 'Autoren der Kreuzzugszeit', pp. 245–54; Holtzmann, 'Studien zu Heinrich von Lettland', pp. 161–78; Bauer, introduction to HCL, p. VI.

Papendorf (Latv. Rubene), which could well reflect an allusion to his boyhood home.⁵ In all probability his mother tongue was Low German.⁶ Although we have no direct evidence about the social status of Henry's family, Paul Johansen's inference that they were likely to have been *ministeriales* seems plausible. Certainly his ecclesiastical patron, Bishop Albert von Buxhövdn (r. 1199–1229), came from this class, as did the two Livonian bishops who preceded him, while the teachers with whom Henry studied were mostly *ministeriales* as well.⁷ If Henry did indeed come from a family of *ministeriales*, that would help to account for his obvious fascination with weapons, tactics and other military matters.

Prior to setting out for Livonia in 1205,⁸ Henry received his formal education and his spiritual and cultural formation most likely in the community of Augustinian canons-regular at Segeberg.⁹ His experiences there coloured his subsequent career and the chronicle that he wrote. Segeberg was founded in 1134 as a Christian missionary outpost on the Slavic frontier.¹⁰ Located at the foot of the Kalkberg and guarded by the Segeberger Burg at the summit, its members

⁵ Paul Johansen, 'Die Chronik als Biographie: Heinrich von Lettlands Lebensgang und Weltanschauung', *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, n.s. 1 (1953), 1–24 (here 9).

⁶ Holtzmann, 'Studien zu Heinrich von Lettland', pp. 178–83.

⁷ Johansen, 'Chronik als Biographie', p. 8; Gisela Gnegel-Waitschies, *Bischof Albert von Riga: Ein Bremer Domberr als Kirchenfürst im Osten (1199–1229)* (Hamburg, 1958), p. 28; Nicolas Bourgeois, 'Les Cisterciens et la croisade en Livonie', *Revue historique* 307/3 [635] (2005), 521–59 (here 554); Bernd Ulrich Hucker, 'Das Herkunft des Livenapostels Meinhard', in *Studien über die Anfänge der Mission in Livland*, ed. Manfred Hellmann (Sigmaringen, 1989), pp. 36–8 (here 37). On *ministeriales*, see John B. Freed, 'The Origins of the European Nobility: The Problem of the Ministerials', *Viator* 7 (1976), 211–42, and 'Ministerials' in *Dictionary of the Middle Ages*, ed. Joseph R. Strayer, 13 vols (New York, 1987–89; hereafter DMA), vol. 8, pp. 404–7, as well as Robert Stacey, 'Nobles and Knights', in *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, 7 vols in 8 (Cambridge, 1995–2005), vol. 8, pp. 13–25 (here 19–21).

⁸ HCL IX.6, pp. 28–9; Johansen, 'Chronik als Biographie', pp. 13–14.

⁹ Although we lack any direct evidence that he studied at Segeberg, circumstantial evidence strongly points in that direction. Segeberg certainly had a school that produced a substantial number of alumni who became missionaries in Livonia, beginning with Meinhard, the first bishop of Livonia, and Henry identifies numerous others. Henry also mentions several Livish, Lettgallian and Estonian boys who returned to Livonia as missionaries after completing their schooling at Segeberg. HCL I.2–4, VI.3, IX.6, X.7; Johansen, 'Chronik als Biographie', pp. 10–11; Simon Gerber, 'Heinrich von Lettland – Ein Theologe des Friedens', *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 115 (2004), 1–18 (here 6); Reinhard Schneider, 'Straßentheater im Missionseinsatz: Zu Heinrichs von Lettland Bericht über ein großes Spiel in Riga 1205', in *Studien über die Anfänge der Mission in Livland*, pp. 107–21 (here 116–19).

¹⁰ Helmold of Bosau, *Chronica Slavorum* I.54, ed. Bernhard Schmeidler, trans. Heinz Stoob (Berlin, 1963), pp. 200–202.

were deeply involved in attempts to convert members of nearby Slavic tribes.¹¹ In retaliation for this, Pribislaw of Brandenburg (d. 1150) burned both church and monastery to the ground in the summer of 1138 during a raid on Lübeck, and the canons fled to Neumünster, the mother house of their community. They finally returned to Segeberg in 1156/57, rebuilt their church and monastery, and reopened their school.¹²

Segeberg was not one of the leading intellectual centres of the late twelfth century. Its school focused on the practical business of preparing young men to become missionaries. Its curriculum sought to provide them with the basic tools they would need to function as clerics. This essentially meant enough Latin to conduct liturgical services properly, read the Bible and comprehend the basic teachings of Christian theology, plus sufficient computational skill to determine the dates of movable feasts. Henry's studies doubtless included Latin grammar and rhetoric, perhaps with some formal logic (dialectic) as well, coupled with some elementary arithmetic.¹³ Henry's classical learning was relatively shallow. The stock classical tags sprinkled through his chronicle he probably encountered in one or more florilegia. His Latin reading focused primarily upon the texts of the Vulgate Bible and the Roman liturgy that a future priest needed to know. His familiarity with those texts no doubt deepened throughout his adult life as he celebrated Mass, recited the daily office, baptized converts and performed the other ceremonies that formed part of his priestly routine. This, together with his schooling at Segeberg, no doubt accounts for the approximately 1,100 allusions to or quotations from biblical and liturgical texts in his chronicle.¹⁴ It is possible that Henry may have studied some patristic writers as well while he was

¹¹ Helmold, *Chronica Slavorum* I.53, p. 200; Karl Jordan, 'Die Anfänge des Stiftes Segeberg', *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Schleswig-Holsteinische Geschichte* 74/75 (1951), 59–94 (here 88–90); Gerber, 'Heinrich von Lettland', p. 6.

¹² Helmold, *Chronica Slavorum* I.55 and 84, pp. 204, 294; see also Stoob's 'Einleitung', p. 4; cf. Jordan, 'Die Anfänge des Stiftes Segeberg', pp. 90–92.

¹³ Melvin Storm, 'Trivium', in DMA, vol. 12, pp. 205–7.

¹⁴ Leonid Arbusow, 'Das entlehnte Sprachgut in Heinrichs "Chronicon Livoniae". Ein Beitrag zur Sprache mittelalterlicher Chronistik', *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 8 (1951), 100–153 (here 102–12), as well as his *Colores Rhetorici: Eine Auswahl rhetorischer Figuren und Gemeinplätze als Hilfsmittel für akademische Übungen an mittelalterlichen Texten* (Göttingen, 1948); Johansen, 'Chronik als Biographie', p. 12; Wilis Bilkins, *Die Spuren von Vulgata, Brevier und Missale in der Sprache von Heinrichs Chronicon Livoniae* (Riga, 1928); Bauer, introduction to HCL, p. XXXV and n. 3; Linda Kaljundi, 'Young Church in God's New Vineyard: The Motifs of Growth and Fertility in Henry's Chronicle of Livonia', *Ennen ja Nyt* 4 (2004), p. 1, online at <<http://www.ennenjanyt.net/4-04/referee/kaljundi.html>>. See also Chapter 2 by Jaan Undusk in this volume.

at Segeberg, for there is reason to believe that he was familiar at least with book 19 of St Augustine's *City of God*.¹⁵

Segeberg, then, was essentially a training school for missionaries and Henry's youthful experiences foreshadowed the direction that his career would take. Meinhard, the first bishop of Livonia (r. 1186–96), had been a member of the Segeberg community before he set out with German merchants in the early 1180s to begin the missionary labours among the pagan Livs in the Düna (Latv. Daugava, Est. Väina, Russ. Dvina) valley that continued until his death in 1196.¹⁶ Although Meinhard must have left Segeberg prior to Henry's arrival, news of his mission was doubtless current within the community while Henry was a student. Several of Henry's fellow students, moreover, would later serve alongside him in the Livonian missions, including a priest named John who was martyred by the pagans at Holme (Latv. Mārtiņsala) in 1206. Engelbert, a brother of Albert von Buxhövdn, bishop of Riga, was a monk of Neumünster, Segeberg's mother house, in Henry's time, while another brother, Rothmar, was a priest in the Segeberg community, and a cousin, Theodoric, had been abbot of Segeberg prior to becoming bishop of Lübeck (1186–1210).¹⁷ Albert himself, of course, was the third bishop of Livonia and would be responsible for bringing Henry to Livonia.

It is likely, moreover, that Henry may have begun to learn the Baltic languages during his school years at Segeberg. He would later use Livish, Lettgallian and Estonian regularly and apparently with some fluency, not only in dealing with his parishioners, but also as an interpreter for missionaries and others unfamiliar with the languages of the region. German missionary bishops routinely demanded that defeated Livs, Lettgallians and Estonians provide boys as hostages.¹⁸ These boys were often sent to Germany to be educated and at least some of them went to Segeberg for this purpose. Henry could have acquired

¹⁵ Gerber, 'Heinrich von Lettland', p. 14.

¹⁶ HCL I.2–3, 14, pp. 1–2, 7; Manfred Hellmann, 'Die Anfänge christlicher Mission in den baltischen Ländern', in *Studien über die Anfänge der Mission in Livland*, pp. 7–38 (here 19–34); Mark R. Munzinger, 'The Profits of the Cross: Merchant Involvement in the Baltic Crusade (c. 1180–1230)', *Journal of Medieval History* 32 (2006), 163–85 (here 165–72).

¹⁷ HCL VI.3, IX.6, XII.6, pp. 17, 28–9, 62; Gnegel-Waitsches, *Bischof Albert*, pp. 33, 34; Johansen, 'Chronik als Biographie', p. 13; Jordan, 'Die Anfänge des Stiftes Segeberg', pp. 93–4; Christoph Schmidt, 'Das Bild der "Rutheni" bei Heinrich von Lettland', *ZfO* 44/4 (1995), 509–20 (here 516). In addition Albert named a fourth brother, Hermann, who had been abbot of St Paul's in Bremen, as bishop of Estonia in 1219; HCL XXIII.11, pp. 168–9, but whether Henry had encountered him at Segeberg is uncertain.

¹⁸ HCL II.5, IV.4, IX.2 and 9, X.7 and 14, XVII.3 and 7, XIX.8, XXI.6, XXIV.1, and XXX.5, pp. 10, 12, 14, 26, 30, 37, 44, 116, 121, 133, 145, 170, 220.

at least a basic knowledge of these Finno-Ugric languages at Segeberg from his schoolmates.

Henry presumably completed his basic education at Segeberg by the summer of 1205, for at that point he joined the household of Bishop Albert as 'the bishop's scholar'. He travelled to Livonia with the rest of Albert's household, which included the bishop's brother, Rothmar, who had been at Segeberg while Henry was there.¹⁹

He spent the next three years studying, presumably with Bishop Albert and other members of his household, in preparation for ordination. What resources Henry had access to during his studies in Riga is not clear, but books were in short supply among the Livonian missionaries.²⁰ It was a major event when in 1203/04 Pope Innocent III (r. 1198–1216) presented a Bible, together with a collection of works by Pope Gregory the Great (r. 590–604) and St Jerome (c. 325–420) to the library of the cathedral.²¹ Henry was fortunate to have the opportunity to study theology with Anders Sunesen, the Danish archbishop of Lund (r. 1201–24), who spent the winter of 1206 in Riga. The archbishop was an accomplished theologian who had studied at Oxford, Paris and Bologna. He was also the author of the *Hexameron*, a theological compendium that summarized opinions current among leading Paris theologians of the late twelfth century.²²

While Henry was still pursuing his studies, Bishop Albert in 1207 divided the Livish regions whose inhabitants had been baptized into parishes and assigned priests to take charge of them.²³ When Henry was finally ordained a priest in the following year, he was assigned a parish in Ümera (Latv. Jumara) on

¹⁹ HCL XI.7 and XVIII.8, pp. 55, 121. Although Henry does not explicitly claim that he was a member of the party, he was clearly present in Livonia by the spring of 1206, which strongly suggests that he must have come on the summer voyage in 1205; Johansen, 'Chronik als Biographie', pp. 13–14.

²⁰ Innocent III in 1208 urged the German bishops to donate books to the Livonian church, and in 1246 Pope Innocent IV likewise called on all religious communities to give some books from their libraries to the impoverished church in Livonia; August Potthast, *Regesta pontificum Romanorum inde ab A. post Christum natum MCXCVIII ad A. MCCCIV*, 2 vols (Berlin, 1874–5; hereafter Potthast), no. 12083; Arbusow, 'Das entlehnte Sprachgut', pp. 107–8, n. 2.

²¹ HCL VII.3, pp. 20–21.

²² HCL X.13, p. 43; Arnold of Lübeck, *Chronica Slavorum* V.18, ed. Johann Martin Lappenberg, MGH rer. Germ. 14 (Hanover, 1868; repr. 1995), p. 174; Torben K. Nielsen, 'The Missionary Man: Archbishop Anders Sunesen and the Baltic Crusade, 1206–21', in CCBF, pp. 95–117 (here 107); Robert Bartlett, *The Making of Europe: Conquest, Colonization and Cultural Change 950–1350* (London, 1993; repr. 1994), pp. 289–91.

²³ HCL XI.2, p. 48; Heinrich Laakmann, 'Zur Geschichte Heinrichs von Lettland und seiner Zeit', *Beiträge zur Kunde Estlands* 18 (1933), 57–102 (here 60).

the Waldausee (Latv. Vaidavas ezers), where by his own account he 'constructed a church and received it as a benefice'.²⁴ Papendorf would remain his home for the remainder of his life and he was still there as a very old man in 1259.²⁵

Henry's parish lay in a frontier region whose Lettgallian population had only recently begun to embrace Christianity.²⁶ Much of his ministry there doubtless consisted of preaching to prospective converts, baptizing those who accepted his message, and instructing his parishioners in the mysteries of the faith. Henry referred in his chronicle to priests like himself, some of whom had 'baptized a thousand, while many others baptized five thousand, and certain of whom baptized ten thousand and more'.²⁷

Since Henry's parish was situated close to a region predominately Estonian in population, he was well informed about the numerous expeditions that passed back and forth between the areas controlled by German Christian forces and Estonia. Indeed he was all too well informed from personal experience, since Estonian and Russian forces apparently burned down his church and parsonage, while he and his parishioners fled for their lives.²⁸ Henry himself participated in numerous campaigns against the Estonians, not only as a missionary, but also on occasion as a fighter, a matter that I shall return to later.²⁹

In between attacks and expeditions, Henry seems to have identified closely with his Lettgallian parishioners. His chronicle is filled with references to their occupations: hunting and fishing, apiculture and raising livestock.³⁰ His anger against anyone, whether Christian or pagan, who attacked or exploited his Lettgallian parishioners emerges plainly from the pages of his chronicle.³¹

²⁴ HCL XI.7, p. 55; Brundage, p. 75.

²⁵ Johansen, 'Chronik als Biographie', pp. 9, 15.

²⁶ Gerber, 'Heinrich von Lettland', p. 6; Johansen, 'Chronik als Biographie', p. 15; Laakmann, 'Zur Geschichte Heinrichs von Lettland', pp. 61, 71.

²⁷ HCL XXIV.6 and XXX.5, pp. 176, 220–21; Brundage, pp. 195, 244–5. Although Johansen, 'Chronik als Biographie', p. 16, claimed that Henry was one of those who had baptized more than 10,000, the text does not actually state this.

²⁸ HCL XIV.12, XX.4, and XXVII.1, pp. 86, 150, 193; Johansen, 'Chronik als Biographie', p. 16; Gerber, 'Heinrich von Lettland', p. 6.

²⁹ HCL XVII.3, XX.2 and 6, XXI.2–5, XXII.2, 9, XXIII.7–9 and perhaps also XII.6, XIV.11 and XVII.5.

³⁰ See James A. Brundage, 'Hunting and Fishing in the Law and Economy of Thirteenth-Century Livonia', JBS 13 (1982), 2–11, as well as Johansen, 'Chronik als Biographie', p. 8.

³¹ For example, HCL XII.6, p. 62; Eric Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades: The Baltic and the Catholic Frontier, 1100–1525* (London, 1980), p. 90; Laakmann, 'Zur Geschichte Heinrichs von Lettland', pp. 62, 75; Angermann, 'Die mittelalterliche Chronistik', p. 8; Johansen, 'Chronik als Biographie', p. 16.

Henry frequently served as an interpreter, both during negotiations between the German authorities and native leaders, and also to render missionaries' sermons into a language that his audience could understand. The services of translators and interpreters were in heavy and continuing demand.³² Henry was, of course, not the only one available; we know the names of at least four others: Philip, Theodoric, Nicholas and Johann, but they were all native-born converts to Christianity who were presumably fluent in Low German and perhaps Latin, as well as in their mother tongues.³³ Henry was unusual in that he was a German priest with a command of Livonian, Lettgallian and Estonian.³⁴ Because of this, no doubt, he was often entrusted with particularly important and sensitive assignments. He tells us himself, for example, that he served at various times as interpreter for Bishop Albert of Riga, for Bishop Philip of Ratzeburg (r. 1204–15) and for the papal legate, Bishop William of Modena (c. 1184–1251).³⁵

Let us now turn from the author to his chronicle. Henry claims that he wrote at the request of his superiors and associates, and circumstantial evidence concerning its composition seems to support that assertion.³⁶ He pretty clearly wrote it in two stages. The first part ended with chapter 29, which dealt with events that occurred in the summer of 1224. Henry subsequently added a final chapter in order to deal with events up to 1227. This chapter centred around the legatine mission of Bishop William of Modena.³⁷ It seems plausible that Henry may have written the first part of the chronicle as what we might call a background brief for the papal legate and that he did so at the bidding of Bishop Albert and perhaps others.³⁸

³² Bartlett, *Making of Europe*, pp. 198–204; William L. Urban, 'Victims of the Baltic Crusade', *JBS* 29/3 (1998), 195–212 (here 205–6). See also Chapter 4 by Alan V. Murray in this volume.

³³ HCL X.7, XV.9, pp. 37, 99; Schneider, 'Straßentheater', pp. 118–19.

³⁴ HCL XVI.3, XVII.3 and XXIII.7, pp. 107, 116, 162; Johansen, 'Chronik als Biographie', p. 10.

³⁵ HCL XVI.3, XIX.5–6, XXIX.2–8, pp. 107, 127–31, 208–14; Johansen, 'Chronik als Biographie', pp. 14–15 claims that Henry, before he was ordained, also served as interpreter for the priest Daniel in 1206, but the passage in HCL that he cites as his authority for this statement does not explicitly bear it out.

³⁶ HCL XXIX.9, p. 215.

³⁷ Bauer, introduction to HCL, pp. XV–XVIII; Angermann, 'Die mittelalterliche Chronistik', p. 7.

³⁸ James A. Brundage, 'The Thirteenth-Century Livonian Crusade: Henricus de Lettis and the First Legatine Mission of Bishop William of Modena', *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, n.s. 20 (1972), 1–9 (here 5–6), repr. in *The Crusades, Holy War and Canon Law* (Aldershot, 1991), ch. XIV; Bauer, introduction to HCL, pp. XVIII–XX; Laakmann, 'Zur Geschichte Heinrichs von Lettland', p. 74; Johansen, 'Chronik als Biographie', p. 3.

He further asserts that: 'Nothing has been put in this account except what we have seen with our own eyes', but adds that: 'What we have not seen with our own eyes, we have learned from those who saw it and who were there.'³⁹ Arbusow noted that this is a patristic *topos*, as indeed it is, but that does not mean that it cannot also be true.⁴⁰ Henry did not arrive in Livonia until 1205, as we have seen, and his description of earlier events there must therefore depend upon what he learned from others. Some of his informants in all likelihood belonged to the Segeberg community, whose members, beginning with Bishop Meinhard, were active in the Livonian mission from the outset. Although Henry was in Livonia (save for his journey to Rome in 1215), so far as we know, for the rest of the time covered by the chronicle (and indeed for the remainder of his life), his knowledge of political developments varied as his personal situation changed. From 1205 to 1208 he remained in Bishop Albert's household in Riga and consequently was well informed about political developments during that period, which he reports on in considerable detail. During his early years as a parish priest on the Estonian frontier, however, he seems to have been notably less knowledgeable about events outside of his immediate neighbourhood and consequently his narrative for that period becomes relatively sparse, save where it concerns nearby regions. When he became interpreter for Bishop Philip of Ratzeburg, between 1212 and 1214, he was back in touch with political affairs and his chronicle reflects this. His journey to Rome to attend the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 with Bishop Albert, his subsequent activities as a missionary priest during the campaigns in Estonia, and his work as an interpreter for William of Modena continued to keep him reasonably well informed during the latter part of the period covered by his chronicle.⁴¹ He occasionally relied on documentary evidence to supplement personal observation and oral reports.⁴²

Henry described his chronicle as a *humili scriptura*, that might prove 'wearisome to the reader', but these phrases were a *captatio benevolentiae*, a rhetorical commonplace intended to capture the reader's sympathy.⁴³ Henry had a keen eye for medieval rhetorical techniques and used them effectively. He writes lucidly, his narrative flows smoothly, and he was alert to capture the telling anecdote or a vivid scene – reflections from massed shields and swords

³⁹ HCL XXIX.9, p. 215; Brundage, pp. 237–8.

⁴⁰ Arbusow, 'Das entlehnte Sprachgut', p. 137.

⁴¹ Laakmann, 'Zur Geschichte Heinrichs von Lettland', esp. pp. 70–77.

⁴² For example, HCL IV.6, XI.3–4, XV.4–5, XVI.4, XXIV.2–3, pp. 14, 49–50, 92–3, 170–72; Arbusow, 'Das entlehnte Sprachgut', pp. 141–5.

⁴³ HCL XXIX.9, p. 215; Bauer, introduction to HCL, p. XXXVI.

lighting up the countryside and dazzling enemies, Estonians terrified at the sight of German horse tackle.⁴⁴

Henry's personal interests and antipathies pervade the chronicle. He was much interested in music. This is particularly clear from an autobiographical passage concerning the first expedition of German and Lettgallian troops into Estonia in 1208:

The priest [Henry], indeed, mounted the ramparts and, while the others fought, sang prayers to God on a musical instrument. When the barbarians heard the song and the sharp sound of the instrument, they stood still, for in their country they had nothing similar. They stopped fighting and inquired about the cause of such rejoicing. The Letts replied that they were rejoicing and praising the Lord because they saw that God was defending them for their recent acceptance of baptism.⁴⁵

Elsewhere he describes German warriors playing drums, pipes and other musical instruments, not only as signs of joy, but also to annoy and harass their enemies.⁴⁶ He frequently mentions bells as well. The sound of a bell, he tells us, terrified the Curonians during an attack on Riga in 1210, since they feared that it must be the voice of the Christian God. Later he tells us that the people of Riga were dismayed by the loss of their 'sweet-sounding war bell' during a fire in 1214, but adds that they soon secured another bell, even larger than the original one, to replace it.⁴⁷ Both Christians and pagans plundered bells, too, from defeated enemy towns.⁴⁸

I have already remarked on his obvious sympathy for his Lettgallian parishioners and his dislike for the Livs and Estonians who harassed them. He was angered, too, when the Sword Brethren exploited them under the guise of enforcing the canon law of tithes.⁴⁹ This concern for his parishioners probably underlies a curious change in Henry's attitude toward the Russians. In the early chapters of the chronicle Henry generally described the Russians in favourable terms, despite the disparity between their version of Christianity and the one that Henry and other Germans adhered to. As late as 1209 he could still refer

⁴⁴ HCL IX.3, XIV.5, XV.3, pp. 27–8, 76, 99.

⁴⁵ HCL XII.6, p. 63; Brundage, p. 85; Arbusow, 'Das entlehnte Sprachgut', pp. 149–50.

⁴⁶ HCL XV.3, XXVIII.5 and 6, pp. 90, 203, 205.

⁴⁷ HCL XIV.5, XVIII.6, pp. 76, 119–20; Brundage, pp. 98, 139.

⁴⁸ HCL VII.1, XIII.4, XXV.5, pp. 19, 70, 184.

⁴⁹ For example, HCL XII.6, XVI.3 and 6, XXIX.3, pp. 62, 104–5, 111, 210–11.

to Russians as fellow Christians.⁵⁰ This changed abruptly when the conversion of Lettgallians and Livs to Latin Christianity aroused Russian hostility. By 1212 Henry was equating Russians with pagans. He noted with obvious scorn that Russians chose not to baptize those who became subject to them, but took tribute instead.⁵¹ By 1223 he was referring to the *Rutheni* as enemies of Christianity.⁵² In his hymn of praise to the Blessed Virgin Mary, he counts among her wondrous accomplishments striking dead Vladimir Mstislavič of Pskov (d. 1228), deposing him as ruler of Novgorod, and slaying Vjačko (d. 1224), the Russian prince of Kokenhusen (Latv. Koknese).⁵³

In contrast, Henry applauded the military, logistical and financial support that German merchants provided for the Livonian mission from its outset. Even before Meinhard undertook his mission in 1184, merchants doing business in the region had regularly brought priests with them on their commercial voyages. They built churches (which also served as warehouses for their goods) in towns that they regularly frequented, notably at Visby in Gotland and Novgorod. They not only fostered Bishop Meinhard's missionary initiative in Livonia, but also continued to encourage and assist missionaries during the years that followed and regularly participated in military expeditions against the pagans.⁵⁴ The relation of merchants to missionaries was essentially symbiotic: both parties benefited from it. While the merchants provided vital assistance to the missionaries, they also stood to gain from the conversion of the Baltic peoples to Christianity, since this helped to protect their persons and property from attack and seizure. Church authorities introduced – or more accurately imposed – a system for third-party adjudication of disputes, which was a key to successful commercial development in Livonia.⁵⁵ Church authorities granted merchants important packages of privileges that made their position both more secure and more lucrative.⁵⁶ Merchants, moreover, ultimately came to constitute a major part of the German population in the cities of Livonia, cities that

⁵⁰ Thus, HCL I.3, X.1, XIII.4, pp. 2, 32–3, 70; Schmidt, 'Das Bild der "Rutheni"', p. 519.

⁵¹ HCL XVI.2 and 5, XX.5, XXIV.4, pp. 103, 111, 137, 173.

⁵² HCL XXVII.5 and 6, XXVIII.4 and 5, pp. 198–9, 202–3.

⁵³ HCL XXV.2, XXVII.5, pp. 179, 197–8; Schmidt, 'Das Bild der "Rutheni"', p. 519.

⁵⁴ Arnold of Lübeck, *Chronica Slavorum* V.30, p. 213; HCL I.2–4, VIII.1, XI.5, XII.6, XIV.5, XV.1, XVI.2, pp. 2, 23–4, 52, 62, 76, 87–8, 104; Bernhart Jähning, 'Die Anfänge der Sakraltopographie von Riga', in *Studien über die Anfänge der Mission in Livland*, pp. 123–58 (here 125–7); Bourgeois, 'Les Cisterciens et la croisade de Livonie', p. 541; Bartlett, *Making of Europe*, p. 309; Munzinger, 'Profits of the Cross', p. 175.

⁵⁵ Munzinger, 'Profits of the Cross', pp. 166–7, 171–2.

⁵⁶ For example, the privilege granted to Gotland merchants by Bishop Albert in 1211, in LUB 1/1, no. 20, cols 25–8.

the missionaries initially created.⁵⁷ The foundation of Riga provides a telling example of the interaction between mercantile and missionary interests. Bishop Meinhard had established his diocese at Üxküll (Latv. Ikšķile), but this proved a poor choice, not solely because the site was difficult to defend, but also because the Düna at that point was too narrow to allow large merchant ships (mainly cogs) to dock and offload their cargo readily. Bishop Albert became concerned about both drawbacks shortly after his arrival in Livonia. He conferred with the merchants and, at least partly on their advice, bought the site where he built the city of Riga, whose topography was easier to fortify and far better suited to commercial needs.⁵⁸

The chronicle also testifies to some of the limits of Henry's education and access to books. His knowledge of systematic theology and canon law appears to have been relatively slight. It is not clear whether he ever had an opportunity to study, or perhaps even to see, the standard textbooks in either subject that were current in his day, namely the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard (written c. 1155–58) which dominated theological teaching in the schools of the late twelfth century and continued to do so long thereafter, and the *Decretum* of Gratian (completed c. 1140), which remained part of the canon law curriculum throughout the later Middle Ages and even into the early twentieth century.⁵⁹ To be sure, as we have seen, Henry did study theology with Anders Sunesen for a few months in the winter of 1206 and the archbishop, who had studied canon law at Bologna and theology at Paris, was undoubtedly familiar with both texts. It seems unlikely, however, that copies of either of them were available in Riga. Certainly I have never found a clear reference to Gratian's work in Henry's chronicle, nor have any other scholars that I am aware of detected allusions to Peter Lombard's *Sententiae*.

Henry's theology, in contrast, derived from biblical and liturgical texts. When he dealt with military affairs, he frequently quoted or alluded with obvious relish to the first book of Samuel and the first book of Maccabees, the two most bellicose books of the Bible, which were also great favourites among writers on the crusades.⁶⁰ Whether he had memorized them I cannot say, but he clearly read

⁵⁷ Paul Johansen, 'Die Bedeutung der Hanse für Livland', *Hansische Geschichtsblätter* 65/66 (1941), 1–55 (here 8–9, 16).

⁵⁸ HCL IV.5 and V.1, pp. 14–15; Gnegel-Waitschies, *Bischof Albert*, pp. 56–7; Munzinger, 'Profits of the Cross', pp. 177–8.

⁵⁹ On Peter Lombard, see especially Marcia L. Colish, *Peter Lombard* (Leiden, 1994); on Gratian, see James A. Brundage, *Medieval Canon Law* (London, 1995), pp. 44–69, and Anders Winroth, *The Making of Gratian's Decretum* (Cambridge, 2000).

⁶⁰ Jonathan Phillips, *The Second Crusade: Extending the Frontiers of Christendom* (New Haven, 2007), p. 56. Geoffrey, abbot of the *Templum Domini* in Jerusalem, wrote a metrical paraphrase of 1 Macc. in 2,334 lines in the mid-twelfth century; Rudolf Hiestand, 'Gaufridus

and reread them often. Although Henry as a priest was supposed to refrain from bloodshed, nonetheless in his heart, as Albert Bauer put it, 'he was by nature a warrior'.⁶¹ Despite the obvious allure that military action held for him, however, Henry had also studied (very likely with the Augustinian canons at Segeberg) St Augustine's well-known argument in *De civitate Dei* that the purpose of war is, or ought to be, to secure peace.⁶² More to the point, he not only accepted this as a basic premise of the Christian life, but also incorporated this insight into his chronicle at numerous points, as Simon Gerber has demonstrated.⁶³

Let me now turn to two problematic aspects of Henry's account of the conquest and conversion of Livonia and Estonia. One of these concerns the conversion procedures that the Baltic missionaries employed, while the second has to do with the problem of military service by clerics, especially priests. Both involve conflicts between the prescriptions of canon law and the practices of German missionaries in the eastern Baltic.

Henry's chronicle describes a consistent missionary strategy in which, after soldiers seized control of a region, priests immediately moved in to baptize the conquered population. Conversion routinely followed conquest almost from the outset of the eastern Baltic mission. The two were linked together in the minds of the missionaries and in the perceptions of the indigenous peoples of the region. 'Preaching and fighting were daily growing stronger', Henry tells us at one point, then adds that this 'perturbed the hearts of all the Livs dwelling near the Düna'.⁶⁴

Abbas Templi Domini: An Underestimated Figure in the Early History of the Kingdom of Jerusalem', in *The Experience of Crusading*, ed. Marcus Bull and Norman Housley, 2 vols (Cambridge, 2003), vol. 2, pp. 48–59 (here 49).

⁶¹ Bauer, introduction to HCL, p. XIII. See also Arbusow, 'Das entlehnte Sprachgut', pp. 108–12; Gerber, 'Heinrich von Lettland', pp. 6–8.

⁶² Augustine, *De civitate Dei* XIX.12–14; likewise his *Epist.* 153.6.16 *Ad Macedonium* (414) and 189.6 *Ad Bonifacium* (418); Louis J. Swift, 'Search the Scriptures: Patristic Exegesis and the *Ius Belli*', in *Peace in a Nuclear Age: The Bishops' Pastoral Letter in Perspective*, ed. Charles J. Reid, Jr. (Washington, 1986), pp. 48–68 (here 62, 67).

⁶³ Gerber, 'Heinrich von Lettland', pp. 8–16.

⁶⁴ HCL IX.12 and 13, p. 31; Brundage, pp. 52–3; Edgar N. Johnson, 'The German Crusade in the Baltic', in *A History of the Crusades*, ed. Kenneth M. Setton et al., 6 vols (Madison, 1969–89), vol. 3, pp. 545–85 (here 545); Carsten Selch Jensen, 'The Nature of the Early Missionary Activities and Crusades in Livonia, 1185–1201', in *Medieval Spirituality in Scandinavia and Europe: A Collection of Essays in Honour of Tore Nyberg*, ed. Lars Bisgaard et al. (Odense, 2001), pp. 121–37 (here 136–7); Andres Kasekamp, 'Characteristics of Warfare in the Times of Henry of Livonia and Balthasar Russow', *Lituanus* 36/1 (1990), 19–32, online at <http://www.lituanus.org/1990_1/90_1_02.htm>; Schneider, 'Straßentheater', p. 120.

Although conversion of the east Baltic pagans was in some ways an experimental process, conquest of non-Christian peoples followed by compulsory baptism of those who survived was certainly no novelty.⁶⁵ Church authorities from the patristic period onward had endorsed the idea that it was proper, indeed laudable, to force the wicked to do good and receiving baptism figured in their minds among the greatest goods.⁶⁶ Charlemagne, during his campaigns against the Saxons, put it bluntly: 'If anyone hereafter among the Saxon people seeks to hide himself and disdains to receive baptism in order to remain a pagan, let him die.'⁶⁷ More recently, in preaching the Slavic crusade of 1147, St Bernard of Clairvaux (c. 1090–1153) had demanded that the crusading forces destroy either the Slavs or their religion.⁶⁸ Henry of Livonia and other missionaries from north Germany were no doubt aware of the forceful methods that their predecessors had employed to secure conversions and adapted them to the situation in Livonia and Estonia.

Yet equally venerable authorities held the opposing view that non-Christians should be converted by kindness, not by force. 'We are pastors, not thugs', wrote Gregory the Great, and he added: 'This is a new and unheard-of teaching that holds that beating leads to faith.'⁶⁹ Instead he advised the bishop of Naples that

⁶⁵ Martin Carver, 'Introduction: Northern Europeans Negotiate Their Future', in *The Cross Goes North: Processes of Conversion in Northern Europe, AD 300–1300*, ed. Martin Carver (York, 2003; repr. Woodbridge, 2005), pp. 3–13 (here 4).

⁶⁶ For example, St Augustine, *Epist.* 185.22 *Ad Bonifacium* (417), incorporated in the *Decretum Gratiani* at C. 23 q. 4 c. 43; see also Gratian's own comments at C. 23 q. 6 d.p.c. 4 §§ 1, 4 and 5. Gratian's *Decretum* and other canon law texts are cited throughout from the *Corpus iuris canonici*, ed. Emil Friedberg, 2 vols (Leipzig, 1879; repr. Graz, 1959). For an explanation of the Romano-canonical citation system, see Brundage, *Medieval Canon Law*, pp. 190–205.

⁶⁷ Charlemagne, *Capitulatio de partibus Saxoniae* c. 8: 'Si quis deinceps in gente Saxonorum inter eos latens non baptizatus se abscondere voluerit et ad baptismum venire contempserit paganusque permanere voluerit, morte moriatur', in MGH *Capitularia* 1.26, pp. 68–70, quoted by Hans-Dietrich Kahl, 'Compellere intrare: Die Wendenpolitik Bruns von Querfurt im Lichte hochmittelalterlichen Missions- und Völkerrechts', *ZfO* 4 (1955), 161–93, 360–401 (here 369, n. 182).

⁶⁸ St Bernard of Clairvaux, *Epist.* 457 in his *Opera*, ed. Jean Leclercq, C.H. Talbot and Henri Rochais, 8 vols in 9 (Rome, 1957–77), vol. 8, p. 652; Friedrich Lotter, *Die Konzeption des Wendenkreuzzugs: Ideengeschichtliche, kirchenrechtliche und historisch-politische Voraussetzungen der Missionierung von Elb- und Ostseeslawen um die Mitte des 12. Jahrhunderts* (Sigmaringen, 1977), pp. 13–17; and more generally, Phillips, *The Second Crusade*, pp. 228–43.

⁶⁹ Gregory I, *Register* 3.52 (July 593), in *Decretum Gratiani* D. 45 c. 1: 'Pastores enim facti sumus, non percussores ... Noua uero atque inaudita est ista predicatio, que uerberibus exigit fidem', *Regesta pontificum Romanorum ab condita ecclesia ad annum post Christum*

non-Christians should be induced to convert through kindness, not force.⁷⁰ Similarly the fourth Council of Toledo decreed in 633 that 'No one henceforth shall constrain belief through force'.⁷¹

Gratian's *Decretum*, the standard canon law textbook in the schools, made this conflict of opinions about coerced conversion plain.⁷² Consequently the closing decades of the twelfth century and the first half of the thirteenth century saw vigorous discussions of doctrine on this matter.⁷³ Although numerous writers flatly rejected the permissibility and even the validity of forced conversion,⁷⁴ Master Rufinus of Bologna (d. 1192), writing c. 1164, introduced a distinction between conditional coercion, which was acceptable, and absolute coercion, which was not.⁷⁵ Alanus Anglicus, a Bolognese master writing around the turn of the thirteenth century, championed a different distinction, and one that German missionaries in Livonia, at least if they knew about it, might have found

natum MCXCVIII, ed. Philip Jaffé, 2nd edn, rev. Wilhelm Wattenbach, Samuel Loewenfeld, Ferdinand Kaltenbrunner and Paul Ewald, 2 vols (Leipzig, 1885; repr. Graz, 1956; hereafter JL), no. 1257.

⁷⁰ Gregory I, *Register* 13.15 (November 602) in Gratian, D. 45 c. 3 *Qui sincera*; JL 1879.

⁷¹ 4 Toledo (633) c. 56 in Gratian, D. 45 c. 5 *De Iudeis*.

⁷² On the disputed history of the *Decretum Gratiani*, see Winroth, *The Making of Gratian's Decretum*, and his 'Gratian's Decretum and the Transformation of Sankt Gallen', online at <<http://pantheon.yale.edu/~haw6/Critique2.htm>>, together with Carlos Larraínzar, 'El borrador de la "Concordia" di Graciano: Sankt Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek MS 673 (=Sg)', *Ius ecclesiae* 11 (1999), 595–666, and 'La formazione del Decreto di Graziano per tappe', in *Proceedings of the Eleventh International Congress of Medieval Canon Law*, ed. Manlio Bellomo and Orazio Condorelli, Monumenta iuris canonici (hereafter MIC), Subsidia, vol. 12 (Vatican City, 2006), pp. 103–17.

⁷³ Benjamin Z. Kedar, *Crusade and Mission: European Approaches toward the Muslims* (Princeton, 1984), pp. 72–4, and 'Muslim Conversion in Canon Law', in *Proceedings of the Sixth International Congress of Medieval Canon Law*, ed. Stephan Kuttner and Kenneth Pennington, MIC, Subsidia, vol. 7 (Vatican City, 1985), pp. 321–32.

⁷⁴ For example, *The Summa Parisiensis on the Decretum Gratiani* to D. 45 c. 3 and c. 5, ed. Terence P. McLaughlin (Toronto, 1952), p. 40; Bernard of Pavia, *Summa decretalium* 5.5.3, ed. E.A.T. Laspeyres (Regensburg, 1860; repr. Graz, 1956), pp. 210–11; Ralph Niger, *De re militari et triplici via peregrinationis Ierosolimitane* (1187/88) 3.90, ed. Ludwig Schmugge (Berlin, 1977), p. 196; Innocent IV, *Apparatus* to X 3.34.8 §8 and 3.42.4 §3 (Frankfurt a/M, 1570; repr. 1968), fol. 430va and 456ra.

⁷⁵ Rufinus, *Summa decretorum* to C. 22 q. 5 c. 1, ed. Heinrich Singer (Paderborn, 1902; repr. Aalen, 1963), p. 400. This distinction was taken up by others, notably Raymond of Penyafort, *Summa de penitentia* 1.4.2, ed. Xavier Ochoa Sanz and Aloisio Diez (Rome, 1976), cols 309–10. See also Stephan Kuttner, *Kanonistische Schuldlehre von Gratian bis auf die Dekretalen Gregors IX* (Vatican City, 1935), pp. 301–7.

appropriate to their situation. Alanus differentiated between non-Christians who put up armed resistance to missionaries and those who allowed them to preach unhindered. The latter must not be coerced to convert, he maintained, but it was legitimate for Christian rulers to make war on and even to slay those who forcibly prevented missionaries from trying to convince their subjects to embrace Christianity.⁷⁶

It is unlikely, although not impossible, that Henry was aware of these disputes among the learned. In the closing chapter of his chronicle he declared that acceptance of baptism should be voluntary. Although his knowledge of canon law was not profound, he had attended the Fourth Lateran Council in November 1215 together with Bishop Albert and presumably heard the constitutions of the council being read out at the closing session on 30 November.⁷⁷ Bishop Albert may have brought back a copy of the constitutions when he returned to Riga, but this is uncertain since the official text was revised by the curia after the close of the council and we do not know how long Albert tarried in Rome after the council ended.⁷⁸ In any event, Henry had almost certainly studied Innocent III's decretal letter *Deus qui ecclesiam* (19 April 1201), since he alludes to its contents.⁷⁹ Bishop Albert surely had a copy of the letter; it was, after all, addressed to him and contained the pope's replies to questions that he had raised. He would have been seriously remiss had he not instructed Henry (who, as noted earlier, described himself as 'the bishop's scholar') in its provisions. The

⁷⁶ Alanus Anglicus, *Apparatus 'Ius naturale'* to C. 23 q. 4 d.p.c. 36, published in Kedar, 'Muslim Conversion', p. 328, n. 32.

⁷⁷ HCL XIX.7, pp. 131–2. An eyewitness mentions the reading of the constitutions during the closing session; Stephan Kuttner and Antonio García y García, 'A New Eyewitness Account of the Fourth Lateran Council', *Traditio* 20 (1964), 115–78 (here 127–8 and 163–4), repr. in Kuttner's *Medieval Councils, Decretals, and Collections of Canon Law*, 2nd edn (Aldershot, 1992), ch. IX.

⁷⁸ Antonio García y García, introduction to his edition of *Constitutiones Concilii quarti Lateranensis una cum commentariis glossatorum*, MIC, Corpus glossatorum, vol. 2 (Vatican City, 1981), p. 11; Gnegel-Waitschies, *Bischof Albert*, p. 171.

⁷⁹ Thus, for example, in HCL XVI.2, p. 103; Brundage, p. 122, Henry states that Bishop Albert 'steadfastly affirmed, therefore, that he would not quit what he had begun, nor would he neglect the duty of preaching, which had been enjoined upon him by the supreme pontiff'. This certainly looks like an allusion to a passage in the *arenga* of *Deus qui ecclesiam* (X 3.1.11) in which the pope declared: 'Unde cum evangelizandi officium eo assumpsisset inspirante, qui facit utraque unum, oportet vos in unitatis et caritatis spiritu ambulare illorum sequentes exemplum ... Ne igitur, si dispar in vobis observantia fuerit et dissimilis habitus, apud eos, quibus unum evangelium praedicatis, scandalum suscitetur ...' Similarly, the list of offences that Christians were bound to avoid in HCL X.15, p. 46, resembles the list in *Deus qui ecclesiam*.

text was incorporated by Petrus Beneventanus (d. 1219/20) in *Compilatio tertia* (1209) and by Raymond of Penyafort (d. 1275) in the *Decretals of Gregory IX* (1234), and was taught in the schools of canon law.⁸⁰

Baltic pagans had, of course, learned the rudiments of their own religion as part of the environment in which they grew up. Christian doctrines and practices, by contrast, had to be explained to prospective converts, which meant that some formal teaching of doctrine was required.⁸¹ One section of *Deus qui ecclesiam* deals with the instruction of converts to Christianity.⁸² In it the pope laid down what Livish converts had to be taught in order to confess their sins properly after they were baptized. He instructed missionaries to see that they understood Christian teachings concerning fornication, adultery, homicide, perjury and other sins. They must also teach converts about the correct method for making confession and make sure that they knew the Lord's Prayer and the creed. Henry himself regularly describes the conversion procedure as a process of teaching prospective converts the basic duties of a Christian prior to baptizing them, although the instruction was often brief.⁸³

Baptism involved acceptance of what Henry described as the 'laws of Christianity'. By this he meant an obligation to abstain from the offences named in *Deus qui ecclesiam*, to confess one's sins regularly and to pay tithes.⁸⁴ Because the regulations governing tithes were complex, Bishop Albert authorized a simplified method of computing how much was owed.⁸⁵ Despite this, the tithe obligation apparently met with resistance in Livonia, doubtless because it drained resources both from individuals and from the community as a whole. The problem was serious enough that the papal legate, William of Modena, warned the Livonian Brethren of the Sword to be careful about the methods

⁸⁰ Petrus Beneventanus split *Deus qui ecclesiam* into three sections, each dealing with a different topic, and Raymond of Penyafort did the same in the *Liber Extra*; it thus appears in 3 Comp. 3.1.2 = X 3.1.11; 4.14.3 = X 4.19.9; and 5.20.1 = X 5.38.8; see also Potthast, no. 1323.

⁸¹ Przemysław Urbańczyk, 'The Politics of Conversion in North Central Europe', in *The Cross Goes North*, pp. 15–27.

⁸² X 5.38.8.

⁸³ For example, HCL XIV.11, XIX.8, XXIII.3 and VII, 24.1, pp. 85, 133, 156–7, 161–2, 169–70.

⁸⁴ HCL X.15, XV.5, XVI.4, XIX.8 and XXIII.3, pp. 46, 93, 110, 132, 156; Munzinger, 'Profits of the Cross', p. 180.

⁸⁵ HCL XV.5, cf. XXI.6, pp. 92, 145–6. On the law governing tithes, see Giles Constable, *Monastic Tithes from Their Origins to the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, 1964), and 'Resistance to Tithes in the Middle Ages', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 13 (1962), 172–85, repr. in his *Religious Life and Thought (11th–12th Centuries)* (Aldershot, 1979), ch. VII.

they used in collecting tithes, since excessive force might lead converts to relapse into paganism.⁸⁶

Finally, let me turn to a matter that has long puzzled me about Henry's chronicle. He makes it very plain that he regularly accompanied German military expeditions on campaign, and that he did this not solely as a chaplain who provided the soldiers with spiritual succour and encouragement and administered the rite of baptism to defeated foes. He and other priests were prepared to join the troops in combat.⁸⁷ A dramatic example occurred in 1219 during an episode in which he combined the two roles. An Estonian from Vironia (Est. Virumaa, Ger. Wierland) named Kyriawan came to Henry to seek baptism; accordingly, he tells us:

We catechized him immediately. Rudolph, the master of the Militia, stood as godfather for him. While we were on the point of anointing him with the holy oil, a great clamour arose and a rushing of our army through all the streets and everyone ran to arms, crying that a great host of pagans was coming against us. We immediately put down the holy chrism and other holy articles, therefore, and hurried to the ministry of shields and swords. We hastened onto the field, putting our battle lines in order against our adversaries, and the elders of the Vironians stood with us. A great multitude of what we thought were enemies approached us. They were the Saccalians, our allies, who were returning to us with all their loot. We returned, therefore, and completed the baptism, but we put off baptizing the others until their proper time.⁸⁸

The problem lies in the fact that canon law had for centuries forbidden all clerics, but especially those in major orders, to serve as soldiers. 'Members of the clerical militia may not serve in the secular militia', declared Pope Nicholas I (r. 858–67), a sentiment echoed a few years later by Pope John VIII (r. 872–82).⁸⁹ The Fourth Council of Toledo (633) decreed that clerics who took up arms were to be degraded from holy orders and must spend the remainder of their lives in a monastery.⁹⁰ Clergymen were not to go about armed with military weapons and certainly must not engage in combat themselves, although they could legitimately urge others to take up arms in defence of the oppressed or to protect

⁸⁶ HCL XXIX.3, pp. 210–11, and cf. XXV.2, p. 181; Munzinger, 'Profits of the Cross', p. 170.

⁸⁷ Johansen, 'Chronik als Biographie', p. 8.

⁸⁸ HCL XXIII.7, pp. 161–2; Brundage, pp. 179–80.

⁸⁹ Gratian D. 50 c. 5 *Clericum* and C. 23 q. 8 c. 1 *Nimium certe*.

⁹⁰ 4 Toledo c. 45 in Gratian C. 23 q. 8 c. 5 *Clerici qui in quacumque*.

the church against its enemies.⁹¹ If a cleric were killed in a battle or a brawl, no prayers were to be said for him, although he could be buried in hallowed ground.⁹² Medieval penitentials, moreover, required anyone, clerical or lay, who killed another in battle, even during a just war, to do public penance.⁹³ Indeed, the Fourth Lateran Council, which, as we have seen, Henry attended, further reinforced the ancient tradition by prohibiting all clerics from engaging in any occupation, whether it be soldiering or surgery, that might involve causing or even witnessing bloodshed.⁹⁴ It seems unlikely in the extreme that Henry could have been unaware of all this.

Despite this, Henry's chronicle provides no hint that either he or anyone else involved in the Livonian or Estonian campaigns considered clerical participation in these wars improper, much less that they did penance for it. The incongruity between the law and their actions is puzzling. The problem is how to account for it.

Three interconnected possibilities come to mind. First, a great many of the clerics involved in the conquest and conversion of the peoples of the east Baltic came from the ranks of the fighting elite in north Germany. As noted earlier, Albert von Buxhövdn and his brothers, together with his predecessors, bishops Meinhard and Bertold (r. 1196–98), descended from families of *ministeriales*. The canons-regular with whom Henry presumably studied at Segeberg likewise came predominantly from ministerial families. It is at least possible, although not certain, that Henry himself was from such a family. If so, that would go a long way toward accounting for his obvious fascination with, and knowledge of, weapons and military affairs.

Second, Livonian bishops and the clerics under their jurisdiction may well have believed that they needed to fight in order to protect themselves and the converts whom they baptized and for whose security they felt responsible.

⁹¹ Gratian C. 23 q. 8 c. 6 *Quicumque ex clero* and d.p.c. 6.

⁹² Gratian C. 23 q. 8 c. 4 *Quicumque clericus*.

⁹³ Bernard J. Verkamp, *The Moral Treatment of Returning Warriors in Early Medieval and Modern Times* (Scranton, 1993), p. 18; Burchard of Worms, *Decretum* 6.23 in PL 140, cols 537–1038 (here 770–71); *Poenitentiale ecclesiarum Germaniae* 5.9, in Hermann Josef Schmitz, *Die Bussbücher und das kanonische Bussverfahren*, 2 vols (Düsseldorf, 1893–98), vol. 2, p. 411. As an example of the way this worked, see the penances imposed on participants in the Battle of Hastings (1066), in *Councils and Synods with Other Documents Relating to the English Church*, vol. 1: A.D. 871–1204, ed. Dorothy Whitelock, Martin Brett and Christopher N.L. Brooke, 2 pts (Oxford, 1981), vol. 2, pp. 581–4.

⁹⁴ 4 Lat. (1215) c. 18 *Sententia sanguinis*, in *Constitutiones Concilii quarti Lateranensis*, p. 66. The constitution also appears in X 3.50.9; an English translation may be found in *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, ed. Giuseppe Alberigo et al., trans. Norman P. Tanner et al., 2 vols (London and Washington, 1990), vol. 1, p. 244.

Bishop Meinhard had been threatened with death and Bishop Bertold had actually been killed, as had other priests.⁹⁵ To judge from his chronicle, the only evidence we have, Henry certainly seems to have believed this – and with good reason. His church and parsonage had been attacked and burned down three times, as we saw earlier, and his parishioners had been attacked by pagan forces more than a few times.

Third, I should add that, traditionally, bishops and other clerics, particularly in northern Germany, had long served as soldiers. Bishops had, for example, led the defences against the Vikings and the Magyars, while archbishops Giseler, Tagino, Walter and Gero of Magdeburg all conducted campaigns against Slavic pagans. Given such long-standing precedents, it is perhaps not particularly surprising that it should have seemed natural to bishops such as Bertold and Albert that they should lead armies and that their clergy should fight in them when required.⁹⁶

Lastly I should note that the church in Henry's day was just starting to establish an effective system for detecting and correcting departures from its disciplinary rules. In view of the persisting problems which churchmen encountered in enforcing canonical rules about matters such as clerical celibacy and marriage among the laity, perhaps it is not altogether astonishing that in this area, too, reality long failed to reflect legal norms.

⁹⁵ Among others, Henry names Salomon, Theodoric, Philip, John, Gerhard and Hermann; HCL XV.9 and X.7, pp. 37, 99.

⁹⁶ Edgar N. Johnson, *The Secular Activities of the German Episcopate, 919–1024* (Lincoln, NE, 1932), pp. 206–18.

PART I

Representations

Chapter 1

Henry of Livonia and the Ideology of Crusading

Christopher Tyerman

The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia provides a rich mine for historians with a wide variety of interests: literary, religious, ecclesiastical, political, economic, philological, ethnological, archaeological, military and nationalistic. The concern here is with the context of the development across Latin Christendom of ideas justifying and promoting a particular form of religious warfare known to us as the crusades. To what extent does Henry's text display the penetration into his north German and Baltic ecclesiastical world of theories of holy war current elsewhere? How does Henry fashion them to suit his local and immediate purposes? Does Henry indicate a coherent ideology at all?

Henry's chronicle is far from an artless compilation. Behind the descriptive recitation of annual events lie clear threads that bind the whole together. It is a work of didacticism and advocacy, a sermon and a manifesto, its seemingly autobiographical tone concealing some of its main purposes. Henry does not seem to have been a chronicler or historian in the sense of sophisticated *literati* such as Gerald of Wales (c. 1146–1223), another who described a conquest (in his case of Ireland), or William of Tyre (c. 1130–86), who similarly wrought a creation myth for a new Christian state (the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem). The Livonian chronicle may have been Henry's sole contribution to the genre. Henry was writing an advocate's brief on behalf of the close group of pioneering clergy, often related to one another, with whom he had been associated as a protégé and dependant since before arriving in Livonia in about 1205. As Henry himself remarked, he had been persuaded to write by 'his lords and companions', probably in the light of the mission to Livonia of the papal legate William of Modena (c. 1184–1251) in 1225–27. Henry wrote to order; and that order probably came from Albert von Buxhövdén, bishop of Riga (r. 1199–1229). If so, this may help provide a terminal date for the final version of the chronicle: 1229, the year of Bishop Albert's death. Even if it was, as often argued, begun as a sort of briefing report for the legate, inconsistencies between Henry's account and papal policy suggest a more precise context. The chronicle's final version,

completed after February 1227, promotes an episcopal Rigan narrative of the conquest of Livonia in contradistinction to rival versions. The years 1227–29 might appear propitious for this task, with the captivity (1223) and subsequent defeat at Bornhöved (1227) of Waldemar II of Denmark (r. 1202–41) reducing the potency of Danish claims to primacy and the departure of Legate William in 1227 allowing a Rigan view to be asserted in opposition to that of the papacy.¹

Another difficulty concerns what is meant by crusade ideology and where it can be discovered. Writing in the earliest years of the twelfth century, the Benedictine Guibert of Nogent (c. 1053–c. 1124) memorably distinguished the *praelia sancta*, the new holy war of Jerusalem, from the just war or *legitime bella* of its predecessors in defence of the church.² The model of what happened between 1095 and 1099 provided both the practical distinctive features of this manner of war – cross-taking, remission of penalties of sins and, by the 1140s at least, various temporal privileges – and the ideological justification. The latter leached into reformist evangelizing and was taken up especially by Bernard of Clairvaux (c. 1090–1153) and the Cistercian order, which later played such an important role in Livonia. However, crusade ideology followed no coherent or single line of development, being as much subject to nostalgia for the great deeds of the First Crusade, local enthusiasms and the reactive opportunism of the papal Curia as to carefully argued theology. Until the 1180s, theory, promotion, rhetoric, reception and implementation display no simple pattern of understanding and belief beyond the association with the Jerusalem war and the institutions linked to it, such as the exhortatory sermon, the giving of the cross, spiritual rewards and the promise of martyrdom. Away from Cistercians, the papal curia, universities and certain restricted aristocratic and clerical circles, crusade ideology was a thing of shreds and patches, ill-formed and far from a universal formula for war against enemies of the Christian church. *Causa 23* of Gratian of Bologna's *Decretum*, almost all of which appeared in the first redaction of 1139/40 and remained unrevised in the text's subsequent reworking, makes no reference to

¹ HCL XXIX.9, p. 237; Brundage, p. 215. Paul Johansen, 'Die Chronik als Biographie. Heinrich von Lettlands Lebensgang und Weltanschauung', *Jahrbucher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, n.s. 1 (1953), 1–24; Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio Hibernica: The Conquest of Ireland*, ed. and trans. A.D. Scott and F.X. Martin (Dublin, 1978); William of Tyre, *Chronicon*, ed. R.B.C. Huygens (Turnhout, 1986). On the Danish context for Henry's work, see now Anti Selart, 'Iam tunc ... The Political Context of the First Part of the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia', in *The Medieval Chronicle*, vol. 5, ed. Erik Kooper (Amsterdam and New York, 2008), pp. 197–209.

² Guibert of Nogent, *Gesta Dei Per Francos*, *Recueil des historiens des croisades: Historiens Occidentaux* (Paris 1844–95), vol. 4, p. 124; Jonathan Riley-Smith, *What Were the Crusades?*, 3rd edn (London, 2003); Christopher Tyerman, *The Invention of the Crusades* (Basingstoke, 1998).

specifically crusading ideology or institutions.³ In their accounts of wars between Christians and non-Christians other than papally proclaimed wars of the cross, writers such as Helmold of Bosau (c. 1120–after 1177) or even William of Tyre, the latter at least in touch with much of the latest smart thinking in the Western clerical elite, do not characterize these conflicts in identifiably crusading terms.⁴ So, far from crusade ideology dominating justifications of inter-religious war, crusading appeared as often subsumed into the theology of pilgrimage, a rationalizing of the radical ideas of Pope Urban II (r. 1088–99) within a familiar, safe, traditional and conservative frame, even if at times an uneasy fit. The use of pilgrimage as a prism through which crusading could be viewed was followed in the later twelfth century by the increasingly legalistic attempt, by popes and university academics, to harness the crusade – a transcendent, redemptive holy act in answer to the direct command of God – to the temporal constraints of just war theory.⁵ *Deus Vult* provided inadequate precision as more care was bestowed on the justice and detail of cause, authority, intent, proportionality and so on. Of course, many of these elements had occupied commentators since 1095, but they now featured more centrally in the rhetoric, even if applied in practice with less scrupulous attention to legal norms.

By 1200, after the convulsive efforts surrounding the Third Crusade (1189–92), crusade motifs and institutions became increasingly embedded in the religious culture of Roman Christianity, at least as conceived and promoted by interested clerical elites. A range of associated ideas revolved around the cross and the Crucified Christ, a redemptive power accessible to the penitent faithful through the offer of remission of sins in return for an overt demonstrative act of taking the cross. The full indulgence was not unequivocally offered by popes to *crucesignati* until Pope Innocent III (r. 1198–1216), although in many quarters – and some papal correspondence – a simple elision of ideas had led to a *de facto* belief in the remission of sin and not just penance before that. Linked to this was the idea – which long pre-dated 1095 – that those who died fighting

³ Anders Winroth, *The Making of Gratian's Decretum* (Cambridge, 2000) for the date of composition and which passages were in each redaction; John Gilchrist, 'The Erdmann Thesis and the Canon Law', in *Crusade and Settlement*, ed. Peter W. Edbury (Cardiff, 1985), pp. 37–45, esp. n. 63; for text, Gratian, *Decretum*, in *Corpus Iuris Canonici*, ed. Emil Albert Friedberg, vol. 1 (Leipzig, 1879), Causa XXIII.

⁴ Helmold of Bosau, *Chronica Slavorum*, ed. Johann Martin Lappenberg, MGH rer. Germ. (Hanover, 1937); William of Tyre, *Chronicon*, XIX.12, pp. 879–81 for his elite Western education.

⁵ H.E.J. Cowdrey, 'Christianity and the Morality of Warfare during the First Century of Crusading', in *The Experience of Crusading*, ed. Marcus Bull and Norman Housley, 2 vols (Cambridge, 2003), vol. 1, pp. 175–92.

for the faith were *ipso facto* martyrs. The crusade became a metaphor for the Christian life, a struggle in which each soul was tested, as was the sinfulness of Christendom itself.⁶ The crusader imitated Christ in bearing His cross. However, local issues coloured this elevated association. In the Baltic, conversion, not a prime feature of crusades in Palestine or even Spain, strongly shaped how crusading ideology was harnessed to the interests of ecclesiastical, commercial and aristocratic empire builders. To just war theorists, it became necessary to argue that pagans presented either a living threat to Christians as individuals or as a community, or that they were contumacious apostates. Pagans could not, according to some theorists, be attacked simply because they were pagan.⁷ This problem stalks Henry of Livonia's text, and he took much care to get the solution to it legalistically correct. At the opposite end of the spectrum to just war came the association with the rights and status of pilgrimage, giving crusaders – or at least their apologists' descriptions of them – the sense that they were marching with saints to saints. The most Holy Land of Palestine was therefore re-sited wherever crusaders hoped to gain remission of sins.⁸ Cross, Christ, penance and indulgence, martyrdom, just war, conversion, Holy Land and crusade as pilgrimage were consequently decked out in regional trappings.

A historiographical point might be made here, as it helps highlight how Henry differs from his predecessors in describing northern wars of Christians against pagans. War *deo auctore* was not an invention of the crusade. Nor, after 1099, were all such wars crusades, nor were they perceived as such. There has been a recent tendency to lump all Baltic religious war together under the banner of crusades, which seems both unhistorical and unnecessary. When Saxo Grammaticus (c. 1150–1220) described Archbishop Absalon of Lund (r. 1178–1201) 'making an offering to God not of prayers but of arms', he was not describing crypto-crusaders.⁹ He was reflecting older traditions that then allowed imported crusade institutions to germinate. Crusading was always a sub-set of holy war. Fighting the infidel was – and had long been – seen as meritorious with

⁶ John Gilchrist, 'The Papacy and the War against "Saracens"', *International History Review* 10 (1988), 174–97; Christopher Tyerman, *God's War: A New History of the Crusades* (London, 2006), esp. pp. 477–500.

⁷ Benjamin Z. Kedar, *Crusade and Mission* (Princeton, 1988); James Muldoon, *Popes, Lawyers and Infidels* (Liverpool, 1979), esp. pp. 3–28.

⁸ Christopher Tyerman, *Fighting for Christendom: Holy War and the Crusades* (Oxford, 2003), pp. 155–89.

⁹ Saxo Grammaticus, *Danorum Regum Historia*, Books X–XVI, trans. Eric Christiansen (Oxford, 1980–81), vol. 2, p. 611; Kurt Villads Jensen, 'Denmark and the Second Crusade: The Formation of a Crusader State?', in *The Second Crusade*, ed. Jonathan Phillips and Martin Hoch (Manchester, 2001), pp. 164–79.

or without the occasional Baltic crusading bulls of the half century after 1147, provided, Helmold of Bosau might lament, participants were moved by faith and charity, not greed and brutality.¹⁰ What makes Henry of Livonia of interest in this context is that, unlike Saxo or Helmold, and more so even than Arnold of Lübeck (c. 1150–1211/14), his chronicle is shot through with shards of crusade ideology.¹¹ Defining all anti-pagan warfare as crusading in twelfth century Scandinavia is more than a semantic choice; it presents a category muddle, is misleading as historical shorthand and obscures the novelty and progress of specifically crusading ideas in northern Europe in the two or three generations after 1150.

Henry of Livonia's use of crusade ideology is revealed in his treatment of warrior remission of sins; canon law; the crusade as pilgrimage; the cross; papal authority; the legitimacy of war, conquest, rule and conversion; the Holy Land and the cult of the Virgin, coloured throughout by Henry's providential tone, use of sources, chiefly scriptural and liturgical, and clear bias. Both the structure of the narrative and the language employed serve the object of demonstrating God's immanence and the unique favours bestowed on and earned by the church of Riga. The work literally begins with Divine Providence and thereafter God is repeatedly said to be taking a direct hand in protecting and assisting His people.¹² Events are located in a double frame; incessant sordid local warfare set in a world vision that embraces even the apocalypse. Thus in 1224 the enemies of the Estonian church are likened to the dragon from Revelations.¹³ The repeated pun on the name 'Riga' irrigating the faithful, and its portrayal as the City of God, rest at the centre of Henry's message.¹⁴ That the chronicle is an account of the creation of a new holy city is signalled in the reference in the very first sentence to Raab and Babylon from Psalm 87 where they are contrasted with Zion, city of God, of which glorious things are spoken.¹⁵

¹⁰ Helmold, *Cronica Slavorum*, pp. 122, 129.

¹¹ Arnold of Lübeck, *Chronica Slavorum*, ed. Johann Martin Lappenberg, MGH rer. Germ. (Hanover, 1868).

¹² HCL I.1, p. 1; Brundage, p. 25.

¹³ HCL XXVIII.4, p. 201; Brundage, p. 222; the sentence continues with a reference to Behemoth from the Book of Job also cited by Innocent III in his Livonia bull of 12 October 1204, LUB 1/1, no. 14; Peter Auksi, 'Henry of Livonia and Balthasar Russow: The Chronicler as Literary Artist', JBS 6 (1975), 107–19, esp. p. 108.

¹⁴ HCL IX.4, p. 28; Brundage, p. 49; Nils Blomkvist, *The Discovery of the Baltic: The Reception of a Catholic World System in the European North (AD 1075–1225)* (Leiden, 2005), esp. p. 511.

¹⁵ HCL I.1 p. 1; Brundage, p. 25.

The heroic story is carefully devised. The opening 'there was a man' motif that introduces the missionary Meinhard (r. 1186–96), with its echoes of John 1:6, develops into an account of the Christian mission that requires defence, by Meinhard's successor Bishop Bertold (r. 1196–98), whose death in battle supplies both the mission's first martyr and the site of the future holy city of Riga. The detail that Bertold died because he could not prevent his horse from bolting into enemy lines merely adds a patina of pathetic realism, a technique that characterizes the whole of Henry's narrative.¹⁶ While the realism of the subsequent accounts of Bishop Albert of Riga's struggles to establish and extend his diocese and temporal rule occupies the foreground of the story, it is sustained by a series of standard providential historiographical conventions. The evangelical clichés of sowing seed, the Lord's vineyard, wolves and lambs, shepherds, and potters' vessels serve to remind an audience of the true heritage of the Livonian plantation, which is Christ's injunction in Mark 16:15, 'Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature'.¹⁷ Some of these associations caught on in sympathetic circles elsewhere. When referring to a particular monk's desire to join the Livonian mission, the Cistercian Caesarius of Heisterbach (c. 1180–c. 1240), well connected with the Cistercian hierarchy in Livonia, uses exactly the same image as Henry of expanding the vineyard of the Lord when telling the story of a missionary there, as did Innocent III in his 1201 encouragement of pacific evangelism in Livonia.¹⁸ These metaphors were commonplace, not least within contemporary crusade propaganda. The image Henry employed when commenting on the divine element in the defeat of the Estonians in 1204, 'Almighty God does not cease to test his elect ones, now placed in various tribulations, like gold in fire', was taken from Job 23:10. It was also used by Innocent III in his great crusade bull *Quia Maior* of 1213, although neither Henry nor Innocent employed exactly Job's text in the Vulgate, nor each other's.¹⁹

¹⁶ HCL I.2–14; II.6 for Bertold's death and II.1–6 for Bertold's mission; X.6 for Bertold as a martyr, pp. 2–10, 36; Carsten Selch Jensen, 'The Nature of the Early Missionary Activities and Crusades in Livonia, 1185–1201', in *Medieval Spirituality in Scandinavia and Europe: A Collection of Essays in Honour of Tore Nyberg*, ed. Lars Bisgaard et al. (Odense, 2001), pp. 121–37, esp. p. 135.

¹⁷ Aukš, 'Henry of Livonia', pp. 110–11.

¹⁸ Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus Miraculorum*, ed. Joseph Strange, 2 vols (Cologne, 1851; repr. New Jersey, 1966), vol. 2, p. 93; Michele Maccarrone, 'I papi e gli inizi della christianizzazione della Livonia', in *Gli inizi del cristianesimo in Livonia-Lettonia*, ed. Michele Maccarrone (Vatican City, 1986), pp. 31–80 (here 78–80).

¹⁹ HCL VIII.3, p. 25: 'quasi aurum in igne probare'; *Quia Maior*, ed. in PL 216, col. 817: 'in quo fidem eorum velut aurum in furnace probaret'; Job 23:10: 'et probavit me quasi aurum quod per ignem transit'.

Henry's chronicle is a literary pastiche and compilation of familiar biblical sources. By far the most frequently used scriptural model was the Books of the Maccabees, closely, although not exclusively, associated with crusaders. It has been suggested that roughly 149 sections of the chronicle contain material from Maccabees with about 64 different borrowings, far outstripping those from any other single book of the Bible.²⁰ The Arbusow-Bauer edition suggests, on my count, that individual quotations, paraphrases and echoes from the two Books of the Maccabees amount to nearly 250. Although some of these verbal echoes are insignificant, Henry's heavy use of the Maccabees as a literary model cannot have been unconscious or accidental. His story was a new chapter in the heroic militant defence of the faith fit to stand comparison with the heroes of the Bible. If he intended his audience to appreciate the connection, that would identify it as not extending far beyond the clerical elite. Less subliminally, the comparison with the Israelites is rammed home in almost the final words of the text as we have it, praising the victory of the Rigan church 'when all the people are baptized, when Tharapita is thrown out, when Pharaoh is drowned'. Innocent III used the same image from Exodus in summoning the Fourth Crusade (1202–04) in August 1198.²¹ This is what Henry's chronicle is about, a universal triumph in which the crusade played a necessary, even if, in Henry's eyes perhaps, not an entirely sufficient, part. From its language alone, it is evident that Henry of Livonia's chronicle was purposeful and, as such, far more engaging and significant than a domestic narrative or closet autobiography.

The central canonical feature of crusading, the offer of remission of sins triggered by the adoption of the cross, pervades Henry's text. However, his treatment is far from straightforward, reflecting his concerns to present the origins of Christian Livonia in a very particular way. By the 1220s, after the clarification of the crusade indulgence by Innocent III and its increasingly regular promotion through the sustained preaching campaigns associated with the Fourth and Fifth Crusades (1213–21), and crusades in Spain and Languedoc, the offer of remission of sins had become standardized. This had not necessarily been the case in the 1190s nor in the Baltic. Pope Alexander III's (r. 1159–81) bull for the Estonian crusade in the 1170s spoke rather equivocally of remission of penance of confessed sins for a year for those who joined up and 'remission of all their sins' for those who died.²² Innocent III did not initially apply it to the Baltic theatre of war. However, Henry portrays the succession

²⁰ Leonid Arbusow, 'Das entlehnte Sprachgut in Heinrichs "Chronicon Livoniae". Ein Beitrag zur Sprache mittelalterlicher Chronistik', *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 8 (1951), 100–153 (here 109). See also Chapter 2 by Jaan Undusk in this volume.

²¹ HCL XXX.6, p. 222; Brundage, p. 246.; PL 214, cols 308–12.

²² PL 200, cols 800–801.

of papal grants of full indulgences as consistent. Thus Pope Celestine III (r. 1191–98) is said to have granted ‘the remission of all sins to all those who would take the cross’ to help Bishop Meinhard’s mission perhaps in 1195/96, an offer repeated for Bishop Bertold in 1197/98, Henry noting ‘as he [the pope] had to his predecessor’. A third grant, perhaps by Celestine III, perhaps by Innocent III, is said to have been discussed at Philip of Swabia’s (1177–1208) Christmas court in 1199. On this occasion, Henry adds that the plenary remission of sins was equal to that granted for the Jerusalem crusade.²³ This is paralleled by Arnold of Lübeck’s statement that Celestine’s grant of indulgences on behalf of Bishop Bertold was equated with those for the Jerusalem war.²⁴ These bulls do not survive. Innocent III’s bull of 5 October 1199 merely offers indulgences equivalent to those granted to pilgrims to Rome. Although after the stalling of the Fourth Crusade in 1204, Innocent suggested that Holy Land vows could be commuted to fighting in Livonia, he consistently regarded the Baltic crusades as less important than those to the Holy Land.²⁵ Henry of Livonia ignores this for two reasons. Firstly, there is no clear evidence that he had direct access to papal letters, and secondly, he – or those who commissioned the chronicle – wished to present Livonia as no less meritorious than the more glamorous crusade to the Holy Land.

The frequency of Henry’s noting of remission of sins highlights the central theme of the spiritual efficacy and value of the Livonian mission, rendering wars of political conquest into exercises in penance and salvation, establishing the legitimacy of the Livonian enterprise and the efforts of Bishop Albert and his annual recruiting drives in Germany. Henry’s treatment of remission of sins speaks of the context of the 1220s and the need to balance continuing papal support for the Livonian mission with the autonomous authority of the bishop of Riga in particular. That the indulgence was attractive can be attested across Christendom. However, Henry’s account of its use and development in Livonia represents an over-simplification of the past to suit the present of the 1220s, exaggerating papal commitment while exposing the essentially freelance nature of Bishop Albert’s recruitment and propaganda. In Henry’s vision, the Livonian ecclesiastical authorities repeatedly underpinned their aggressive and expansionist activities by appeal to the formula of remission of sins, probably reflecting actual policy. Equally, Henry’s invariable and repetitive formula reveals how an otherwise rather complicated, reactive and changing official policy

²³ HCL I.12; II.3; III.2, pp. 7, 9, 12; Brundage, pp. 30, 32, 35–6.

²⁴ Arnold of Lübeck, *Chronica Slavorum*, pp. 214–15.

²⁵ LUB 1/1, nos 12 and 14. See now Iben Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *The Popes and the Baltic Crusades 1147–1254* (Leiden, 2007), esp. pp. 99–104, 111. See also Chapter 8 by Iben Fonnesberg-Schmidt in this volume.

regarding crusade spiritual privileges could be perceived on Christendom's wild frontline. What William of Modena, a former official of the papal chancery, might have made of Henry's distortion of papal correspondence can only be imagined, his potential dissent arguing for a completion date for the chronicle after his departure.²⁶

Another feature of Henry's description of the crusades and crusaders that placed him within contemporary constructions of crusading was his use of the language of pilgrimage. Although by 1200 the connection between crusading and pilgrimage had become umbilical to the extent that it was even applied by some observers to the Albigenian crusade, there was nothing neutral about this.²⁷ Helmold of Bosau, in his description of the Second Crusade, rather pointedly distinguished between the Spanish and Palestinian campaigns, which he called pilgrimages, and the Baltic enterprise, which he did not.²⁸ In his bull authorizing a holy war against the Estonians in 1171/72, Alexander III (r. 1159–81) equated the participants' remission of penance for one year to that granted 'to those who visit the sepulchre of the Lord'.²⁹ A generation later, eager to place the Baltic wars in the same conceptual frame as papal holy wars elsewhere, Arnold of Lübeck appropriated the pilgrimage in his account of Bishop Bertold's military intervention in Livonia.³⁰ Henry first refers to Livonian crusaders as pilgrims when describing the discussion of crusader privileges at Philip of Swabia's Christmas court in 1199: here, he draws an exact parallel between the Livonian enterprise and the Jerusalem crusade.³¹ Thereafter the association is ubiquitous. This manipulation of perceptions should be placed in the context of the famous Lateran Council declaration of Livonia as the land of the Virgin Mary, holy ground under the protection of the mother of God and increasingly irrigated by the blood of martyrs.³² By insisting relentlessly on the crusaders as pilgrims, Henry reinforces the status of the Livonian mission. By the 1220s, this perspective may have seemed more reasonable, accommodating

²⁶ Fannesberg-Schmidt, *Popes*, chapters 1 and 2; Barbara Bombi, *Novella Plantatio Fidei: Missione e crociata nel nord Europa tra la fine del XII et i primi decenni del XIII secolo* (Rome, 2007), esp. pp. 270–77; Blomkvist, *Discovery of the Baltic*, esp. pp. 509–60, 623–56; 664–6; Selart, 'Iam tunc ... The Political Context'.

²⁷ *Layettes du Trésor des chartes*, ed. Alexandre Teulet et al., vol. 2 (Paris, 1866), no. 1789.

²⁸ Helmold, *Cronica Slavorum*, pp. 115, 117, 118.

²⁹ PL 200, cols 800–801; James Brundage, 'The Thirteenth Century Livonian Crusade: Henricus de Lettis and the First Legatine Mission of Bishop William of Modena', *Jahrbucher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, n.s. 20 (1972), 1–9 (here 2–3).

³⁰ Arnold of Lübeck, *Chronica Slavorum*, pp. 214–15.

³¹ HCL III.2, p. 12; Brundage, pp. 35–6.

³² HCL XIX.7, p. 132; Brundage, p. 152.

Henry's shaping of the foundation narrative of Christian Livonia according to a carefully crafted model of sanctity.

At the centre of this lay the cult of the Virgin Mary, its association with Livonia constituting a major element in Henry's chronicle. Henry's promotion of Livonia as the land of Christ's mother mirrors the policy of Bishop Albert, indicating the variety of responses to crusading as well as a localism easily overlooked in general accounts of crusade ideology. His missionary-oriented monastery of Segeberg was dedicated to the Virgin Mary, as was Riga and its cathedral. The idea of taking 'the cross to the land of the blessed Virgin' provided Livonia with unassailable credentials, the land of God's Mother a suitable destination for a 'pilgrim knight', as Henry describes one admittedly corrupt German crusader.³³ As Henry tells it, Livonian crusaders marched under banners of the Virgin. The earliest surviving Livonian charter confirmed the annexation by Bishop Albert of Gerzike (Latv. Jersika) in 1209 as a donation to the church of the Virgin Mary, an association explicitly recorded by Henry, signalling his dependence on Bishop Albert.³⁴ With the papacy more concerned to place Baltic conquests under the protection of St Peter and the Roman see, Henry's need to insist on this distinctive status was apparent in papal refusal to elevate Livonia to the importance of Jerusalem, witnessed by Innocent's customary avoidance of standard Holy Land crusade terminology in his correspondence; his indifference to controlling preaching, recruitment or seemingly even Bishop Albert's regular grants of crusade indulgences; and Pope Honorius III's (r. 1216–27) demand for Livonian ecclesiastical tithes to assist the Fifth Crusade in the Mediterranean in 1219.³⁵ The Livonian cult of the Virgin cut little ice in Rome.

Henry's insistence that the pope accepted Bishop Albert's claim at the Fourth Lateran Council – which Henry probably attended – for parity between 'the land of the Mother' and the 'land of the Son' smacks of invention and false propaganda, reflecting no general political or ideological acceptance of this formulation but rather Henry's carefully constructed weaving of the Virgin into his accounts of the missionary wars.³⁶ Campaigns against the Estonians in 1216, 1218 and 1224 were said to have begun on the Feast of the Virgin Mary; the Christians captured Fellin (Est. Viljandi) on that day in 1223.³⁷ Just before his account of the Lateran Council, Henry's narrative prepared the ground by

³³ HCL XV.4, XI.4, pp. 92, 50; Brundage, pp. 113, 70.

³⁴ LUB 1/1, no. 15; HCL XIII.4, p. 71; Blomkvist, *Discovery of the Baltic*, pp. 646, 664; Bombi, *Novella Plantatio Fidei*, p. 277.

³⁵ Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *Popes*, pp. 99–131; Innocent III's and Honorius III's letters fail to echo Livonian Mariolatry; LUB 1/1, no. 42 for Fifth Crusade money.

³⁶ HCL XIX.7, p. 132.

³⁷ HCL XX.2; XXII.2; XXVII.2; XXVIII.5, pp. 135, 148, 195, 202.

attributing to the Virgin the defeat of an Estonian/Öselian attack on the fleet carrying the Rigan clerical embassy to Rome. The Mother of God had been invoked by the praying clergy and she had answered the call, provoking Henry's comment: 'The Blessed Virgin freed us that day, as She has freed the Livonians from all their troubles up to the present day.'³⁸ The subsequent, and perhaps consequent, Lateran Council statement stands as a guarantor of the authority and independence that the cult of the Virgin provided to Bishop Albert's Livonian plantation. Henry's promotion of this image reaches a climax in a bloodcurdling passage in chapter 25, where it is shown in detail how the Queen of Heaven saw off all the enemies of the Rigan settlement, including Christians, massacring a list of pagan notables, slaughtering apostates, expelling the Danes, repulsing the Swedes, engineering the captivity of Waldemar II, killing Vladimir of Pskov and Vetseke of Kokenhusen, despoiling the kings of Novgorod and so on: 'See how many kings ... princes and elders of treacherous peoples She has wiped off the earth.'³⁹ This comprehensive, uncompromisingly brutal and violent catalogue is only mildly toned down by reference to Her gentleness to faithful believers and later, at the end of chapter 29, possibly where an earlier draft ended, by association with Christ.⁴⁰ The end of the current final chapter 30 sums it up in describing the Christian victory over the Öselians in 1226: 'what kings [a dig at the king of Denmark] have hitherto been unable to do, the Blessed Virgin quickly and easily accomplishes through Her Rigan servants to the honour of Her name.'⁴¹ That such veneration for a distinctly martial Virgin was not as universal in the north in the early thirteenth century as it later became is witnessed by Arnold of Lübeck. While collapsing chronology in attributing the foundation of Riga dedicated to the Virgin to Bishop Meinhard, Arnold later remarked that Bishop Albert and the Livonian church's protector was God Himself, with no mention of His mother.⁴²

The apparent discrepancy between Henry's Marian enthusiasm and papal indifference both to the Livonian cult of the Virgin and to the association of the crusade there with that to the Holy Land raises the question of papal authority, a key element in formal crusading. Henry is well aware of the importance of this in justifying the Livonian crusade and ecclesiastical establishment. One of the most notable features of Henry's chronicle is the almost complete absence of any acknowledgement of the role of the archbishop of Hamburg-Bremen in the early mission and conquest. Archbishop Hartwig (r. 1185–90/92 and

³⁸ HCL XIX.5, pp. 129–30; Brundage, p. 150.

³⁹ HCL XXV.2, p. 180; Brundage, p. 199; Blomkvist, *Discovery of the Baltic*, p. 646.

⁴⁰ HCL XXIX.9, p. 215.

⁴¹ HCL XXX. 6, p. 221; Brundage, p. 245.

⁴² Arnold of Lübeck, *Chronica Slavorum*, pp. 210–11 and 212.

1194–1207) gets hardly a mention and then only in terms either neutral – consecrating Meinhard – or passive – the Livs sent to him for a new bishop after Meinhard's death.⁴³ Henry was determined to portray Livonia as autocephalic and autogenous but, at the same time, enjoying direct papal approval. By initially emphasizing the bulls of Celestine III, Henry deliberately reduces the primary role of the archbishop of Hamburg-Bremen in the Livonian enterprise of the 1180s and 1190s, reflecting Bishop Albert's later efforts to assert his independence.⁴⁴ The care with which Henry charts continuing papal authorization for Bishop Albert's activities also speaks of the world in which Henry was writing in the 1220s, the circumstances of William of Modena's mission. Yet even William's mission, according to Henry's account, came not from a papal initiative but at Bishop Albert's request.⁴⁵ This follows an almost invariable pattern of Livonian petitions and embassies to the Curia, leading to papal grants that reinforced the image of Bishop Albert's jurisdictional independence in justifying his policies of violence, forced conversion and ecclesiastical imperialism. This duality of papal authority and Livonian autonomy was summed up by Henry's phrase 'Roma dictat iura, Riga vero rigat gentes'.⁴⁶

The patina of order and orthodoxy was certainly important in the context of William of Modena's mission, even if it hardly encompassed the reality of Bishop Albert's freelance crusade recruiting that extended to the determination of a crusader's term, one campaign season, a local variant of admittedly rather confused conventions. The vexed relationship of the bishop and the Livonian Sword Brethren, an issue needing careful negotiation by Legate William, was neatly prejudged by Henry's insistence that Innocent III had placed them in obedience under Bishop Albert in 1202. Henry glossed over the sharp competition for authority that lay behind the papal arbitration of the 1210 division of Livonia between the bishop and the Brethren, implying the bishop's pre-existing superior local jurisdiction.⁴⁷ Papal patronage of the violent mission in Livonia was illustrated by the story of the convert Caupo's visit to Rome and Innocent's gift to Bishop Albert of a Bible allegedly written by Gregory the Great (r. 590–604), a pope famous for his sponsorship of the conversion of the English, a fact pressed on the Rigan church by Innocent III himself in

⁴³ HCL I.8; II.1, pp. 4, 8.

⁴⁴ Bombi, *Novella Plantatio Fidei*, pp. 270–71; Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *Popes*, pp. 84–5.

⁴⁵ HCL XXIX.2, p. 208; LUB 1/1, no. 69 for William's appointment on 31 December 1224; Brundage, 'Thirteenth Century Livonian Crusade'; Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *Popes*, pp. 170–76.

⁴⁶ HCL XIX.7, p. 132.

⁴⁷ HCL VI.4; XI.3, pp. 18, 48–50; LUB 1/1, nos 16–19 for the 1210–11 papal and imperial arbitration; nos 74, 78, 82–4, 86–8, 93 for William's arbitration in 1225–26.

1201, although in the context of urging a moderate and sympathetic process of evangelizing alien to Bishop Albert, an irony wholly lost on Henry.⁴⁸ Even when Honorius III failed to resolve disputes between Bishop Albert, the Danes and the Russians, Henry creates a general impression of unwavering, if somewhat vague, papal approval.⁴⁹ The bishop of Riga as loyal son of the Roman church, but with quasi-archiepiscopal power, the right to recruit crusaders and the special protection of the Mother of God: this was the careful juggling act insinuated by Henry's chronicle, diverting attention from the extent of private enterprise and absence of papal supervision. A comparison of Henry's account of papal support with papal letters reveals how far the chronicler exaggerates the precise authority granted Bishop Albert, although even he cannot lend Bishop Albert the crusade legate status that his account indicates the bishop simply appropriated.⁵⁰ The Lateran Council exchange merely stands as the most blatant or *ben trovato* of such constructions.

Henry's concern to establish papal authority – like his mention of Bishop Albert's attempts to receive German imperial sanction and patronage – occupies just one corner of a much larger canvas of legitimization of the Livonian war, forced conversion, Bishop Albert's rule and the Christian conquest. Henry treads carefully but firmly along a path of legalistic respectability that both marks out his vision of the Livonian crusade as distinctive while simultaneously fitting early thirteenth-century concerns to apply just war categories to the holy war of the crusade. Canon law forbade forced conversion. How much canon law Henry knew must remain conjectural, yet from the very start of his narrative, Henry is careful to establish the legal case for the crusades that followed. Meinhard promised to build strong forts for the Livs in return for their conversion. They accepted the deal, swearing oaths that they would receive baptism, sworn commitments that were explicitly repeated. Once the stone fort had been completed, the Livs apostatized. Later, afraid that Meinhard was intending to bring an army to coerce them, the Livs once more promised to adhere to the Christian faith, but once again proved deceitful. This led to the mission of Theodoric of Treiden (d. 1219) to Celestine III and to the first, in Henry's account, crusade bull granted on the grounds that the Livs 'ought to be forced to observe the faith which they had freely promised'. In Henry's version, remission of sins was offered to those who took the cross 'to restore – *ad resuscitandam* – that newly founded church'.⁵¹ While baptism at sword point was far from unknown in the Baltic and features in late twelfth-century German

⁴⁸ HCL VII.3 pp. 20–21; Maccarrone, 'I papi', pp. 70, 78–80.

⁴⁹ HCL XXIV.4, p. 173.

⁵⁰ HCL XI.9, p. 57 for Bishop Albert's offer of fresh indulgences to German crusaders.

⁵¹ HCL I.5–12, pp. 3–7, quotation at 7; Brundage, pp. 26–30.

literature, for example, in the *Rolandsleid*, Henry's argument is subtler.⁵² He seems anxious to avoid the startling extravagance of Innocent III's approval in 1209 of the Danish war against the Finns 'to extirpate the error of paganism and extend the frontiers of Christendom' by forcing the pagans to become Christians.⁵³ Such uncompromising and legally suspect doctrine had no place in the cultivated intellectual world of Legate William of Modena, a man noted for his close connections with the Dominicans. Henry's later rehearsal of the Meinhard apostasy episode, for example, in his account of the campaign of 1205, suggests its structural and conceptual importance.⁵⁴ Henry's initial justification of apostasy and threat found an echo in Innocent III's bull of December 1215, reminiscent of that of 1204, with its talk of using the material as well as spiritual arms to protect the 'new plantation of the Christian faith against the barbarian nations'.⁵⁵ However, in so far as the papacy bothered with the fine details of the Livonian crusade at all, the Curia's justification fitted a pragmatic dimension of papal policy rather than, as Henry would have it, any more glorious or transcendent cause.

Henry's initial justifications for the Livonian war resound through the whole of the rest of his work, embracing conflicts with local apostates, pagans and Russian Orthodox Christians.⁵⁶ It is the central distorting lens that allows Henry's audience to view Bishop Albert's wars as exercises in defence and suppression of apostasy and rebellion rather than foreign invasion, conquest and civil war. It is perhaps a measure of Henry's sensitivity to the missionary dimension of the Livonian conflict, born of his own experience as a pastor to the newly converted, that he is so determined to portray the conquest as legitimate. His care may also reflect an understanding that not everyone felt as easy with such militant Christianity as did Henry or Bishop Albert. In that sense, Henry's chronicle provides an insight into the thirteenth-century debate over the relationship of crusade and mission. While not doubting the validity of the Livonian crusade, Henry does seem to go to inordinate and repetitive lengths to insist on its justice,

⁵² Jeffrey Ashcroft, 'Konrad's *Rolandslied*, Henry the Lion and the Northern Crusade,' *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 22 (1986), 184–208; Horst Richter, 'Militia Dei: A Central Concept for the Religious Ideas of the Early Crusades and the German *Rolandslied*,' in his *Journeys Towards God*, ed. Barbara N. Sargent-Baur (Michigan, 1992), pp. 107–26.

⁵³ PL 216, cols 116–17; trans. Jonathan and Louise Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: Idea and Reality 1095–1274* (London, 1981), pp. 77–8.

⁵⁴ HCL IX.8 and 11, pp. 29–30, 31.

⁵⁵ DD 1: 5, no. 61; cf. LUB 1/1, no. 14.

⁵⁶ Blomkvist, *Discovery of the Baltic*, pp. 627–42; Anti Selart, 'Confessional Conflict and Political Co-operation: Livonia and Russia in the Thirteenth Century,' in CCBF, pp. 151–76, esp. pp. 153–8.

and to do so on conventional Augustinian grounds: defence or restitution; right intent; due authority; charity for enemies as well as allies; to which was added the traditional crusading twist of legitimate revenge for past wrongs.

From the initial supposed grant of Celestine III, the pattern of legitimization remained consistent. Hostile local peoples are dismissed as pagans and, routinely, as *perfidia*, who habitually apostatize, break the peace and their oaths.⁵⁷ Perfidy is the characteristic of barbarians – the Öselians are deceitful tricksters; ‘apostate peoples’ in the account of a campaign in 1223 – in contrast to the constancy of the faithful even in the face of martyrdom. War on the Lithuanians is just because they are ‘enemies of Christ’, a crude blanket cover for victims of German aggression. The Livonians’ capacity for repeated backsliding justified conquest and dispossession: ‘the Livonians were unworthy of such a large fort for, although they had been baptised, they were still rebels and unbelievers’, but, once they genuinely or, perhaps more accurately, obediently accepted Christianity, those who seemed ‘justly [*non immerito*] to have lost villages and fields and other possessions were permitted to regain them’, as if it were not the Germans who were the interlopers and dispossessors.⁵⁸ Perhaps that is what worried Henry. In the developing theories of natural law, unprovoked conquest of the lands of others was controversial if not actively condemned. Specific injustices, such as piracy, holding Christians captive and atrocities against the faithful, were emphasized as just grounds for attack, even though the Christians indulged in identical practices in reverse.⁵⁹ Once established, however, the Livonian church provided its own justification, Henry deploying standard rhetoric to portray the beleaguered Christian outpost, including the language of liberation, one of the very seeds of crusade ideology in 1095.⁶⁰ Yet Henry’s continued insistence on supporting his narrative with the lexicon of just war may point to a conscious need to persist in arguing the justice of the Christian Livonian cause.

Henry also justifies German aggression in terms of revenge, a crusade motif that reached back to the First Crusade, and one that is implicit in certain biblical texts well used by holy war advocates, such as Psalm 137: ‘happy shall he be that

⁵⁷ See Henry’s accounts of campaigns in 1200, 1206, 1210, 1211, 1212, 1217, 1223, 1224; Tiina Kala, ‘The Incorporation of the Northern Baltic Lands into the Western Christian World’, in CCBF, pp. 3–20 (here 15–16).

⁵⁸ HCL IX.11 and 13, pp. 31, 32; Brundage pp. 52–3 for quotations; cf. HCL VII.1; XXVII.1; IX.3, pp. 19, 27, 195.

⁵⁹ Muldoon, *Popes, Lawyers and Infidels*, esp. chapters 1–3; for example, captives, HCL XI.5, p. 52; pirates, VII.3, XII.6, XIX.5, pp. 24, 62, 129; for atrocities justifying retaliation, HCL IX.11, X.5, X.7, XVIII.8, XIX.3, XXII.8, XXIII. 5, pp. 31, 35–6, 37, 121–2, 124–5, 152, 158–9.

⁶⁰ For example, HCL XI.5, XV.3, XIX.6, XXVI.11, pp. 52, 90, 130, 192.

rewardeth thee as thou hast served us.' On occasion, Henry is meticulous in presenting revenge as a legitimate response. In 1208, the Rigans moved against the Estonians, largely because they threatened the commercial interests of the German merchants. The *casus belli* was the Estonians' refusal to make reparation for injuries done to Christian Letts. In reply to messages 'to demand satisfaction for all the injuries which they had suffered', the Estonians 'rendered no justice' and so the Letts and Rigans 'avenged their injuries with fire and sword'. The tone is legalistic: 'You have not restored the goods stolen from the Germans and also the things often stolen from us.'⁶¹ Thereafter the theme of vengeance is especially associated with wars against the Estonians, '*vindictam faciunt*'.⁶² Once conversion had spread, Estonian opponents of the Rigans could be dismissed in secular terms as traitors or rebels. The mechanisms of vengeance could be extended to the Orthodox Russians in retaliation for Russian attacks on Catholic Livonia. In 1221, the Rigans and their Lettish allies plundered Orthodox churches: 'for all the harm which the Russians had brought upon the Livonians, they received double or triple that year.'⁶³

The goal of the Livonian wars was both the protection of the new Christian plantation and the conversion of the pagans. A deliberate contrast is drawn with the alleged motives of the Russians who desired land 'not with the hope of regeneration in the faith of Jesus Christ, but with the hope of loot and tribute'.⁶⁴ Conversion is central to Henry's story and acts as the ultimate justification for the warfare. As the conquered are given the chance of salvation, the intention of the conquerors is just and good, doubly so as they are also defending their existing co-religionists and the infant Livonian church from assault and recidivism. Pagan defeat is followed by baptism which is followed by active conversion by priests such as Henry himself in mission churches and monasteries. Those who initially 'freely' (whatever that meant) converted were then encouraged to remain in or forced to return to the faith by arms.⁶⁵ Forced baptism was a familiar theme of Baltic warfare in the second half of the twelfth century, in official policy of some German ecclesiastics, famously Bishop Berno of Schwerin (d. 1191) towards the Rugians; in the wars of the Danes against pagan neighbours; and in the

⁶¹ HCL XII.6, pp. 62–4; Brundage, pp. 83–5.

⁶² HCL XV.3, p. 90; see also X.13, XIV.10; XVIII.5, XXIII.8; XXV.4; XXVIII.6 (justifying a massacre of women and children), XXX.1, pp. 43, 82, 119, 164, 205, 216; for God's own vengeance, XXVI.10, p. 191.

⁶³ HCL XXV.5–6, pp. 184–5; Brundage, pp. 203–4.

⁶⁴ HCL XXVIII.4, p. 202; Brundage, p. 222.

⁶⁵ For example, HCL I.12, p. 7; for the Livonian conversion, see Bombi, *Novella Plantatio Fidei*; Kala, 'Incorporation'; Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *Popes*, pp. 52–78, 113–31, 162–79.

wider secular cultural setting, for example, of twelfth-century German stories of the wars of Charlemagne.⁶⁶ It has been argued that Henry's account of the Livonian mission reveals a military dimension from the start, during Meinhard's mission.⁶⁷ Yet the issue of legitimacy is not entirely shirked or assumed. Henry allows the pagan Livs to put the invaders intellectually on the spot when he has them tell Bishop Bertold he could have peace provided he removed the threat of violence except on those who had already converted, and conducted his missionary work 'with words not with blows'. But the Livs immediately revealed their perfidious nature and so battle was joined and, after the German victory, baptism imposed.⁶⁸ The story merely confirms the necessity of military force.

This approach was reinforced by the role played in the Livonia conquest by the Cistercians. Since Bernard of Clairvaux's 'convert to exterminate' call in 1147, Cistercians had not only been vociferous in their support for crusade as well as conversion, but some had appeared to see no problem with enforced baptism.⁶⁹ In 1208, one of the leading figures in the Livonian settlement, Theodoric of Treiden, Cistercian abbot of Dünamünde (Latv. Daugavgrīva), led an army against Selburg (Latv. Sēlpils). After a sharp siege, the fort's garrison was allowed to surrender on condition they accepted baptism. In 1200 Theodoric had gone to Rome on Bishop Albert's behalf to ask Innocent III to authorize crusade privileges for German soldiers in Livonia. In 1219, he met his death on the Danish expedition to Estonia that he himself had urged on King Waldemar II the year before.⁷⁰ The embrace of violence by the Cistercians in the cause of expanding the church is well demonstrated by the career of one of Theodoric's companions of 1218 in asking for a Danish attack on Estonia, his successor as abbot of Dünamünde, Bernard of Lippe (c. 1140–1224). A battle-hardened warrior, a debilitating malady of his feet persuaded him to abandon his secular life and become a Cistercian. In 1211 he arrived in Livonia with that year's crusaders, apparently as a missionary. Yet, in Henry's account, he is said to have taken the cross, an act that instantly cured his lameness.⁷¹ Originally, Urban II

⁶⁶ Helmold, *Cronica Slavorum*, pp. 173–4, 211–14; Kedar, *Crusade and Mission*, p. 140, n. 16; Ashcroft, 'Konrad's *Rolandsleid*', pp. 190–201; in general, Friedrich Lotter, 'The Crusading Idea and the Conquest of the Region East of the Elbe', in *Medieval Frontier Societies*, ed. Robert Bartlett and Angus MacKay (Oxford, 1989), pp. 267–306.

⁶⁷ Jensen, 'Nature of the Early Missionary Activities.'

⁶⁸ HCL II.5–7, pp. 9–10; Brundage, pp. 32–3.

⁶⁹ Bernard of Clairvaux, *Opera Omnia*, ed. Jean Leclercq et al. (Rome, 1957–), vol. 8, p. 433, letter no. 457.

⁷⁰ HCL XI.6, IV.6, XXII.1, XXIII.2, pp. 53–4, 14, 146–7, 155; Henry also records his involvement in founding the Sword Brethren, VI.4, p. 18.

⁷¹ HCL XV.1, XV.3, XV.4, XXII.1, pp. 88, 91, 92, 146.

had forbidden monks from becoming crusaders.⁷² In his letter of October 1204 allowing Jerusalem *crucesignati* to commute their vows to Livonia, Innocent III had rather pointedly referred to the Cistercians in Livonia as fighting ‘*spiritualibus armis*’, in contrast to the Sword Brethren’s secular warfare.⁷³ Yet empathetic cross-taking by monks was not unknown, especially as they, like secular clergy, were to be found at the head of crusade armies; Otto of Freising, another Cistercian, took the cross in 1147; Bernard of Clairvaux was touted as non-fighting leader of a planned crusade in 1150; Abbot Martin of the Swiss Cistercian house of Pairis, took the cross as a preacher of the Fourth Crusade; another of Bernard of Lippe’s contemporaries, Arnaud Aimery, abbot of Cîteaux itself, organized the early sanguinary stages of the Languedoc crusade from 1208–09 and joined the crusade in Spain in 1213.⁷⁴ To have a monkish preacher as a *crucesignatus* added to the aura of elevated community that suffused crusade rhetoric and promotion, characteristic of thirteenth-century crusading.

Another approach was to stress the regenerative power of taking the cross spiritually and, in this case, physically, the outward symbol of the inner dedication to God’s cause. The healing associated with taking the cross that Henry introduces in his story of Bernard of Lippe alludes to this familiar trope and places his thought-world squarely in the mainstream of hagiographic and evangelical writing surrounding the efficacy of crusading in the thirteenth century.⁷⁵ Bernard of Lippe and Theodoric of Treiden, no less than Bishop Albert, operated in an international context. Both feature in their fellow Cistercian Caesarius of Heisterbach’s *Dialogus Miraculorum* (1219–23).⁷⁶ The Cistercian network helped prevent Livonia descending into complete provincialism. For Henry, the Cistercian connection provided one of a number of channels for the receipt and transmission of ideas: his own education in Germany; perhaps the Hamburg-Bremen historiographic tradition; the Augustinians; the immigrant clergy; the commercial elites of Riga; visiting crusaders; possibly the theology lessons given by Archbishop Anders Sunesen of Lund (r. 1201–28) in Riga in

⁷² Urban II to the religious of Vallombrosa, 7 October 1096, Wilhlem Wiederhold, ‘Papsturkunden in Florenz’, in *Nachrichten von der Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, Phil. hist. Kl.* (Göttingen, 1901), pp. 313–14.

⁷³ LUB 1/1, no. 14.

⁷⁴ Abbot Martin is the closest parallel, Gunther of Pairis, *Hystoria Constantinopolitana*, ed. and trans. Alfred J. Andrea (Philadelphia, 1997), p. 68.

⁷⁵ HCL XV.4, p. 92; Tyerman, *Invention*, p. 82.

⁷⁶ Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus*, vol. 2, pp. 93, 149, 193, 243; see also pp. 287 and 297.

the winter of 1206–07; and his own and Bishop Albert's travels to Rome and the courts of Germany.⁷⁷

In this wider community, debate over the balance of crusade and conversion remained vigorous. Henry seems to have followed the Cistercians in a duality of approach to pagans and infidels. His attitude is congruent to, but far less nuanced than, say, the classic formulation of the link between violence and conversion later proposed by Innocent IV (r. 1243–54).⁷⁸ Where Innocent argued that violence was legitimate if non-Christians refused, hindered or mistreated Christian missionaries, Henry follows the more basic line of Bishop Albert and the German-Livonian elite: effective conquest and German rule depended on conversion as a means of social and political control, cohesion and discipline that, for the faithful, could be presented as an enforced lesson for the converts' own good, as paraded in the prominence given to the convert grandee Caupo and Henry's trite equation of Christianity with material success and well-being.⁷⁹ Most of these issues are present in the account of the siege of Fellin in 1211. The besieged were offered a deal: accept Christianity and their captured comrades would be spared and they themselves would be received (*colligo*) 'in the charity of fraternity with us and the bond of peace.' After refusing the initial peace conditions, the defenders ultimately accepted terms, overwhelmed by the technological superiority of the German military machinery, by casualties and by a shortage of water: 'We acknowledge your God to be greater than our gods. By overcoming us, He has inclined our hearts to worship him. We beg, therefore, that you spare us and mercifully impose the yoke of Christianity upon us as you have upon the Livonians and Letts.' A pre-baptism ritual then occurred amidst the slaughter, but even the Germans felt squeamish about actually administering the baptismal sacrament surrounded by such carnage.⁸⁰

However, the language – and reality – of dominance invited problems over the treatment of the new converts. One clear object of William of Modena's mission was to secure the conversion by settling disputes among the ruling

⁷⁷ For the Hamburg-Bremen context, see Linda Kaljundi, 'Waiting for the Barbarians: Reconstruction of Otherness in the Saxon Missionary and Crusading Chronicles 11th–13th Centuries', in *The Medieval Chronicle*, vol. 5, ed. Erik Kooper (Amsterdam and New York, 2008), p. 113–27; for Sunesen, HCL X.13, pp. 43–4; Torben K. Nielsen, 'The Missionary Man: Archbishop Anders Sunesen and the Baltic Crusade 1206–21', in CCBF, pp. 95–118, esp. pp. 106–8; HCL XIX.5, pp. 127–30 implies – but does not state conclusively – that Henry travelled to Rome in 1216.

⁷⁸ On Innocent IV, Kedar, *Crusade and Mission*, pp. 159–69; Muldoon, *Popes, Lawyers and Infidels*, pp. 29–48.

⁷⁹ HCL VII.3, X.10, X.13, XIV.8, XIV.10, XVI.3, XXI.2, XXI.4, XXIX.1, pp. 20–21, 40, 44, 79, 82, 105, 142, 143–4, 207.

⁸⁰ HCL XIV.11, pp. 83–5; Brundage, pp. 105–7.

German elites and regulating the treatment of converts who, despite the best efforts of parish priests such as Henry himself, existed as second-class citizens and second-class Christians in a German church state. In passages that sit uneasily as implicit criticism of much of the rest of Henry's narrative, Legate William, echoing Innocent III's injunction of 1201, told the Germans not to impose 'any harsh, unbearable burden upon the shoulders of converts'. The Sword Brethren in Estonia were warned against harshness 'either in taking tithes or in any other matter whatsoever'.⁸¹ These strictures contradict Henry's optimistic praise for an almost Edenic peace and security that he claimed had descended on Livonia by 1225, conveniently to coincide with the legatine mission.⁸² Such peace, according to Henry, unknown even before Meinhard's mission, depended on the Livs' acceptance of Christianity. In reality, the legate appeared worried by the conditions imposed on converts, such as, for example, the reparations, tribute and tithes instituted, according to Henry, by Bishop Albert in 1212. The legate's concerns may have been theological; he was later, in 1238, to be in correspondence with Gregory IX (r. 1227–41) over the plight of converted Livonian slaves.⁸³ They may have been more pragmatic, as when he urged a policy of leniency on the Sword Brethren 'either in taking tithes or in any other matter whatsoever lest through such conditions [the Estonians] shall again be forced to return to paganism'. The desire for temporal power and the threat of force was seen by some as a positive hindrance to conversion, famously by Roger Bacon in his attack on the Teutonic Knights' policy in Prussia in his *Opus Maius* (1268).⁸⁴ However, even if Henry shared the legate's queasiness over some methods practised by the Germans in Livonia, lest any in his audience imagine that the representative of the Roman Church could possibly disapprove, Henry closes the final version of his chronicle with the account of Legate William's campaign in Ösel, from preaching the cross and recruiting German crusaders in Gotland to the subsequent massacres and mass coerced conversions.⁸⁵ Henry's message was clear. God, His Mother and the pope all support the wars fought for the Livonian church without any equivocation, a mix of local, international and transcendent perspectives that distinguish the whole work.

Therefore, Henry of Livonia's chronicle both is and is not what it seems, a simple narrative of conquest and conversion. The influences on it are literary, theological, evangelical, political and polemic. Henry was clearly not in the orbit

⁸¹ HCL XXIX.3, pp. 209–10; Brundage, p. 231; Maccarrone, 'I papi', pp. 78–80.

⁸² HCL XXIX.1, pp. 207–8.

⁸³ HCL XVI.4, pp. 109–11; Kedar, *Crusade and Mission*, p. 214, Appendix 2d.

⁸⁴ HCL XXIX.3, pp. 209–10; Brundage, p. 231; for Bacon, see Kedar, *Crusade and Mission*, pp. 177–80.

⁸⁵ HCL XXX, pp. 215–22; Brundage, 238–46.

of the smart Paris set of intellectuals that set the tone of crusading rhetoric in the early thirteenth century, men such as Jacques de Vitry or Robert Curzon. He was influenced by his own experience and the circumstances of his frontier career. Henry also provides evidence of the circulation of ideas by writing, a significant element in forging Christendom into a seemingly coherent reality in the early thirteenth century. He talks of papal bulls defining the nature of the holy war being sent not just to Bishop Albert or the Master of the Sword Brethren but, as in 1211, circulated among potential recruits.⁸⁶ Yet Henry himself seems to have been largely immune to this written dimension of the Livonian crusade. His knowledge of the papal correspondence appears second hand, general, imprecise, if not downright distorted. Henry's chronicle, in this and other respects, bears comparison with Gerald of Wales's *Expugnatio Hiberniae* (1188) of a generation earlier, another frontier narrative that slants papal authorization towards legitimizing a brutal secular conquest and shares a persistent concern with legitimacy, military details, the imposition of ecclesiastical tithes, and the recidivist treachery of those being conquered that helps justify the violence meted out to them.⁸⁷

Henry's chronicle reveals how far specifically crusade motifs had spread into Livonia by the 1220s, received in rather broad terms by a Christian German culture accustomed to religiously sanctioned warfare. Of course, Henry cannot speak for all the German Livonian elite – a Sword Brethren chronicle would read very differently –, but he was a well-connected participant as well as observer. The repeated formula of taking the cross for remission of sins demonstrates both the adoption of international crusading norms and the crudeness of their reception. Henry's care to assert papal authority maps a different world to that described by Helmold of Bosau, while, at the same time, showing clearly how consistently Rome reacted to Livonian demands rather than initiated them, a useful corrective to those who view papal uniformity and plenitude of power as actual rather than aspirational. The insistence that the Livonian crusade be equated with the Holy Land crusade confirms how crucial the Holy Land element was in lending religious war respectability, particularly as in fact the Livonian crusade exposed the papal scale of value as placing Livonia well short of the Holy Land. Henry's chronicle illustrates how diverse, disparate and lacking in legalistic precision the idea and practice of crusading could be in the early thirteenth century, but also how certain features were becoming standardized, if only rhetorically. Yet literary equivocation was marginalized by the brutal experience of the annual tours of German crusaders.

⁸⁶ HCL XIV.13, p. 87.

⁸⁷ Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio Hiberniae*; Robert Bartlett, *The Making of Europe: Conquest, Colonization and Cultural Change 950–1350* (London, 1993), pp. 97–8.

Henry's creation myth for Christian Livonia may not have been widely circulated. However, compared with the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* of the late thirteenth century, for instance, it is evident that his vision matched later perceptions: the role of Meinhard; pagans provoking violence; early papal authorization; remission of sins; the cult of the Virgin.⁸⁸ However, in the *Rhymed Chronicle*, composed for the Teutonic Knights, there is none of Henry's anxiety to establish the justice of the military enterprise: by the 1290s and in that audience, the legitimacy of the war is assumed. Henry, by contrast, is creating, not confirming, a myth and a historical perspective. To do this he imposes clear but misleading guidelines: a unity among Germans questioned by his own narrative; papal authority denied by papal documents; defence not conquest; suppression of rebellion not civil war; Bishop Albert subordinating the roles of the mercantile elite and the Sword Brethren; a denial of the pre-existing political interest of the Russians in the region, and so on. Behind the compelling detail, the scheme of Henry's account emerges as optimistic, imaginative, manipulative and self-serving, itself part of the exercise of state building. However false or partial the vision, Henry's chronicle stands as a monument to the pervasive exploitation of religious war by conquerors and missionaries alike, a cultural traction that played so potently on the remotest frontiers of medieval Christendom, where brutal invasion could be portrayed as waking the idolatrous 'from the sleep of idolatry and of sin', a miracle for its times.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ *The Livonian Rhymed Chronicle*, ed. and trans. Jerry C. Smith and William L. Urban (Bloomington, 1977), esp. pp. 5–7, 19. The ameliorative legatine mission of 1225–27 is not mentioned.

⁸⁹ HCL I.1, pp. 1–2; Brundage, p. 25.

Chapter 2

Sacred History, Profane History: Uses of the Bible in the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia

Jaan Undusk

The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia has mostly been read as a compendium of various empirical facts. It is very rich in them indeed. Without a doubt, it is a treasure chamber of unique value as regards the events that took place at the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth centuries in the area traditionally known as Old Livonia. It gives us the first fundamental narrative of the northern Baltic lands and all the peoples involved there: Livs, Lettgallians, Estonians, Germans, Russians, Lithuanians. There is no older telling of the story of this land except for a few fragments here and there, and Henry's chronicle is even today the basis for all subsequent narratives concerning the Baltics and for more general discussions of Baltic themes.

At the same time, hardly anybody asks about the philosophy of history in this chronicle. Worse still, the opinion that Henry had no philosophy, or even theology, of history is widespread. He is held to have been a simple priest writing down the things he could see with his own eyes, to a large extent autobiographically and with an earnest Christian fervour but without the need for some metahistorical perspective, *ohne tiefere historische Einsicht* ('without any deeper historical understanding'), as Leonid Arbusow says.¹

However, it is my opinion that Henry, not unlike many other medieval chroniclers, writes on two levels all the time – historically and metahistorically, empirically and universally. His metahistorical interest in the universal course of history is by no means weaker than his participation in the everyday doings of his Christian comrades-in-arms and their pagan counterparts. At the same time, Henry is not explicitly theoretical, of course – on the contrary, he is typological in a specific sense of this word. In his text, he presents profane events and

¹ Leonid Arbusow, *Liturgie und Geschichtsschreibung im Mittelalter* (Bonn, 1951), p. 87.

their metahistorical positioning as adjacent to each other, like in an allegorical narrative where the plot and its moral explanation go hand in hand.

Henry and the Bible

In Henry's chronicle, we cannot find any of the famous medieval schemes for writing universal histories. For example, following St Augustine (c. 354–430), the history of mankind was sometimes divided into six ages which corresponded to the six days of creation in the Bible. At the end of his *City of God* (completed in 426), St Augustine writes: '... if the epochs of history are reckoned as "days", following the apparent temporal scheme of Scripture, ... the first "day" is the first period, from Adam to the Flood; the second from the Flood to Abraham, and so on.² We are now in the sixth epoch, according to St Augustine, and after that, on the seventh day, God will rest and we shall find our rest in him. He claims, in fact, that the eighth, or the Lord's Day will arrive as well, and this one is to last for ever.

There was also the prophet Daniel's vision of the four beasts, after which the theory of the four world powers was established; at the beginning of the twelfth century, it became more and more widespread to divide world history into three parts modelled on the principle of the Trinity (Joachim of Fiore, c. 1135–1202).³ There were others. Theological schemes of this kind have no place in Henry's vision: he neither theorizes nor speculates, but depicts a span of historical time lasting slightly more than 40 years. However, another level is inescapably present in his text, call it metaphysical, metahistorical, universal or sacred. This is probably influenced by the general worldview of St Augustine, adopted in the Middle Ages, and according to which the city of God and the city of man (or the sacred and the profane) are engaged in a struggle with each other lasting the whole course of worldly history until the end of time.

² St Augustine, *Concerning the City of God against the Pagans*, trans. Henry Bettenson (London, 1987), p. 1091.

³ See, for example, Anna-Dorothee von den Brincken, *Studien zur lateinischen Weltchronistik bis in das Zeitalter Ottos von Freising* (Düsseldorf, 1957); Ossip L. Vainshtein, *Западноевропейская средневековая историография* (Moscow, 1964), pp. 78–87; the following articles in *Geschichtsdenken und Geschichtsbild im Mittelalter: Ausgewählte Aufsätze und Arbeiten aus den Jahren 1933 bis 1959*, ed. Walther Lammers (Darmstadt, 1961): Johannes Spörl, 'Die "Civitas Dei" im Geschichtsdenken Ottos von Freising', pp. 298–320 (here 305); Herbert Grundmann, 'Die Eigenart mittelalterlicher Geschichtsanschauung', pp. 430–33 (here 430–32); Otto Brunner, 'Abendländisches Geschichtsdenken', pp. 434–59 (here 450); see also Gabrielle M. Spiegel, 'Historical Thought in Medieval Europe', in *Companion to Western Historical Thought*, ed. Lloyd Kramer and Sarah Maza (Malden, MA and Oxford, 2006), pp. 78–98 (here 83).

The metaphysical machinery which Henry makes use of is the text of the Holy Bible. For a typical medieval historian, the whole Bible was identified with the sacred history of the world and of mankind. This was the only absolutely true history, written by the hand of God – or at least inspired by him – and given to humankind through Revelation. Every other writing about history was a profane reflection of the sacred history which had to have some correspondence with the sacred one or be judged false. Thus, there indeed existed a test for historical truthfulness and this was rooted in the Bible. All the universal schemes mentioned above – the division of history into three, four or six parts – derive from the Bible, in principle. The medieval historian had to look for some correspondence between his writing and Holy Writ, if his aim was not just to tell entertaining stories about ancient and modern times but rather to persuade the audience that these stories ought to be taken as part of human history, or in other words as highly meaningful data. In the medieval religious mind, a reference to the sacred text of the Bible was in some sense comparable to a scholarly footnote today. The best proof of this attitude is provided by the writings of its later opponents, for example, Galileo Galilei's (1564–1642) *Letter to the Grand Duchess Christina Concerning the Use of Biblical Quotations in Matters of Science* (1615).⁴ Henry of Livonia does not employ big speculative schemes based on the biblical text, but he cites it, and he uses its situations to create a typological space surrounding the events which took place in thirteenth-century Livonia.

Henry's immense ardour for citing the Bible has gained a lot of attention. Of course, you cannot draw the line between a real citation and a simple biblical expression which was perhaps a commonplace at that time. In any case, the number of citations in the chronicle is overwhelming. It would be a hard task to find another medieval historian whose text is so packed with biblical language as Henry's chronicle is. Albert Bauer, one of the chronicle's more recent editors, for example, speaks of 1,100 loans from religious books, mostly from the Bible.⁵ One can but agree with the Latvian historian Wilis Bilkins's conclusion that 'our author cites the Bible extensively. There are not many medieval chroniclers who could compare themselves to Henry in this respect, or overshadow him. ... The number of citations shows that our author has mastered the contents of the Vulgata well.'⁶ The Estonian litterateur Juhan Luiga has even used the high

⁴ *Discoveries and Opinions of Galileo*, ed. and trans. Stillman Drake (Garden City, NY, 1957), pp. 175–216.

⁵ Albert Bauer, 'Einleitung', in *Heinrich von Lettland, Chronicon Livoniae. Livländische Chronik*, ed. Leonid Arbusow and Albert Bauer (Darmstadt, 1959), p. XXIX.

⁶ Wilis Bilkins, *Die Spuren von Vulgata, Brevier und Missale in der Sprache von Heinrichs Chronicon Livoniae* (Riga, 1928), p. 70.

level of biblical citations as a criterion for distinguishing between the supposed original manuscript and later interpolations.⁷

At the same time, we lack knowledge of how much Henry borrowed directly from the Bible and how much from the liturgical books, especially the Breviary. Some scholars even ask whether Henry in fact read the Bible at all or instead relied entirely on the Breviary.⁸ But this is not especially important at present, because the language in both books is roughly the same, its origins are in the Bible in any case, and the Breviary represents the same spiritual registers as the Bible.

It is the paradox of Henrician scholarship that the man who contributed more than anyone else to our knowledge of Henry's textual relations to the Bible was at the same time not willing to recognize the higher spiritual function of biblical citations in the chronicle. This man was Leonid Arbusow Jr., a great empirical historian but perhaps not so outstanding as a thinker in the field of the history of ideas. As far as I am able to decide, most researchers of later generations follow his line of argument. Thanks to Arbusow, as well as to his students and colleagues, Bilkins and Bauer, we today know precisely how much Henry's text owes to the language of the Bible. At the same time, Arbusow only acknowledges the rhetorical, or even, perhaps, only the linguistic, relationship between Henry's text and Holy Writ. His *idée fixe* is Henry's poverty of words (*Wort- oder Ausdrucksnot*), his lack of linguistic abilities (*ein sehr unselbständiger Sprachgestalter*, 'a man who lacks the smallest amount of creativity in writing') that forces him to borrow expressions from the Bible or the Breviary, which he knows by heart.⁹ So, according to Arbusow, Henry is not skilled in writing, and he simply has to use the working language of his everyday practice as a priest – the words of the Bible, that is to say.

Arbusow's other idea – connected to the previous one – is that Henry mostly cites not only from memory, but partly also unconsciously, or unintentionally.¹⁰ Henry is often not aware that he is citing the Bible, only using the language he has the best command of. So, strictly speaking, Henry is not citing at all, the Bible is just his linguistic world – his narrow linguistic world, as Arbusow suggests. One could argue that his interpretation of Henry is dominated by the modernizing perspective of an enlightened historian. When Arbusow explains Henry's frequent practice of repeating the same or a very similar expression in a similar situation (a sign that would make one attentive!), he claims that the reason for this lies in Henry's relatively poor education, in his lack of linguistic

⁷ Juhan Luiga, 'Läti Hendriku kroonika kriitika', *Eesti Kirjandus* 16/6 (1922), 193–202 (here 195).

⁸ Bilkins, *Die Spuren*, p. 76.

⁹ Arbusow, *Liturgie*, pp. 80, 87.

¹⁰ Arbusow, *Liturgie*, pp. 80, 87–8.

sophistication. In any case, for Arbusow the chronicler's pervasive reliance on the Bible is a sign of his personal inadequacy. In his last book, *Liturgie und Geschichtsschreibung im Mittelalter*, Arbusow makes a systematic comparison between Henry of Livonia and Otto of Freising (c. 1114–58), one of the leading chroniclers and intellectuals of his time, regularly calling Henry the *Bildungsantipode* ('the educational opposite') of Otto, so as to stress his poor scholarly training.¹¹ Some years later, another well-known Baltic German historian, Paul Johansen (born in Tallinn as a son of Danish parents), published an influential article in German, 'Die Chronik als Biographie: Heinrich von Lettlands Lebensgang und Weltanschauung', in which he adopted Arbusow's position without the slightest hesitation: Henry constantly repeats phrases from the Bible because he is a fairly naive and simple person.¹² Albert Bauer, of course, also takes the side of his academic teacher.¹³

At the same time, there is an alternative opinion, different from the dominant Baltic German standpoint, which is represented by some other major experts in the field. This was forcefully put forward by Sergei Anninski, who independently reconstructed the text of the chronicle, translated it into Russian and published it with a substantial commentary. Anninski rejects the view that Henry is a simple-minded run-of-the-mill cleric, inexperienced in writing. He is able to see him as a Latin 'stylist, and sometimes a rather good one, a masterly orator', as 'one of the most wonderful medieval chroniclers.'¹⁴ By the way, Anninski stresses Henry's professional use of citations. Some later scholars as well, among them James A. Brundage and Enn Tarvel, speak of Henry's linguistic and literary skills in an appreciative tone.

I am not the person to evaluate Henry's command of Latin. My task is to demonstrate that the basis for Arbusow's evaluation of Henry's literary achievement is, at least in part, wrong.

Biblical Citation in General

Henry cites amply, but not only from the Bible. The chronicler's citations have been classified in the following pattern: (a) a few citations from a florilegium, or anthology, of Latin texts, which was used in medieval schoolteaching – this

¹¹ Arbusow, *Liturgie*, pp. 3, 42.

¹² Paul Johansen, 'Die Chronik als Biographie. Heinrich von Lettlands Lebensgang und Weltanschauung', *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, n.s. 1 (1953), 1–24.

¹³ Bauer, 'Einleitung', p. XXIX.

¹⁴ Sergei A. Anninski, 'Введение', in Генрих Латвийский, Хроника Ливонии, ed. and trans. Sergei Anninski (Moscow and Leningrad, 1938), pp. 25, 27.

is probably the origin of the quotes from Virgil, Horace, Ovid and Cicero in Henry's text; (b) citations from the works of the Church Fathers, with which Henry was acquainted via the Breviary (he probably had not read the actual patristic texts); (c) fragments from contemporary documents (letters, and so on); (d) borrowings from the languages of the local pagan peoples, and so on.¹⁵ Yet most of the citations derive from the Vulgate and liturgical books including the Breviary, Missal, Sacramentary and Agenda. Henry's main source is the Vulgate, the Latin Bible, even though it is not possible to draw a clear line between this and the liturgical books because so many textual overlaps between them exist. This has provoked Wilis Bilkins to question whether Henry used the Vulgate at all, as it is possible that all the biblical material in his text has been mediated via the Breviary.¹⁶ Only the Breviary used by Henry would give a definite answer to this question, but this text has never been discovered. In 1203/04, however, Pope Innocent III had a manuscript of the entire Bible sent to the young and poor Livonian church, and this probably became a tool for Henry.¹⁷ Therefore, when in the following part of the chapter biblical quotations are mentioned, the concern is not whether Henry quotes directly from the Bible, or via intermediary texts; what matters here is the general biblical origin of the quotation.

Bilkins counted 775 biblical quotations in Henry's chronicle. Albert Bauer complemented the list and enlarged the total number of quotations beyond a thousand, as mentioned above. To highlight the significance of this number, scholars have used comparisons with other chronicles contemporary to Henry's. Thus, around 500 citations have been counted in the *Chronica slavorum* (c. 1172) of Helmold of Bosau (c. 1118/25–77), while the follower of Helmold's work, Arnold of Lübeck (c. 1150–1211/14), used biblical citations far less frequently in his *Chronica slavorum* (c. 1210).¹⁸ As mentioned above, Leonid Arbusow also compared Henry's text, viewing it especially from a liturgical perspective, with one of the most famous medieval chronicles, the *Historia de duabus civitatibus* (c. 1143–45) of Otto of Freising, coming to the conclusion that Otto's text could under no circumstances have drawn upon a plenitude of biblical and liturgical citations characteristic of Henry's chronicle.¹⁹

A comparison with earlier chroniclers would give even more sharply contrasting results. Although the Venerable Bede (c. 672/73–735) had an

¹⁵ Leonid Arbusow, 'Das entlehnte Sprachgut in Heinrichs "Chronicon Livoniae". Ein Beitrag zur Sprache mittelalterlicher Chronistik', *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 8 (1951), 100–153.

¹⁶ Bilkins, *Die Spuren*, p. 76.

¹⁷ Arbusow, 'Das entlehnte Sprachgut', p. 108 (cf. HCL VII.3, p. 21).

¹⁸ Bilkins, *Die Spuren*, p. 70; Arbusow, 'Das entlehnte Sprachgut', p. 109.

¹⁹ Arbusow, *Liturgie*, pp. 42, 87.

excellent knowledge of the Bible, this hardly shows in his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (c. 732). Up to the beginning of the twelfth century, historians were not in the habit of citing the Bible very often. After that, for various reasons (the rising ideology of the crusades, the founding of the mendicant orders), interest in the Bible, and especially in the Old Testament, which had not previously been the focus of attention, grew rapidly; history and theology intertwined with one another to a greater degree than at any other period before or after.²⁰ Thus, Henry's chronicle is a fruit of the golden era of biblical citations in European historiography.²¹

It is noteworthy that the use of biblical citations is especially consistent and conceptualized in the descriptions of the First (1096–99) and the Fifth (1217–21) Crusades, which also demonstrate the highest degree of theological enthusiasm.²² The Fifth Crusade is the Holy Land crusade closest in time to the period during which Henry's chronicle was written (probably 1224–27). Writing about the year 1220, Henry reminds the reader of the most significant event of this war, the conquest of the Egyptian town of Damietta at the end of 1219: 'At that same time, indeed, the Christians from the land of Jerusalem had taken Damietta, a city of Egypt. They lived in it and the church of God had victory and triumphs over the pagans everywhere throughout the world ...'²³ We know how important Egypt was for Henry as a symbol of a pagan stronghold: the chronicle both begins and ends with the typological motif of the subjugation of Egypt, borrowed from the Old Testament. In this context, the conquest of Damietta by the crusaders must have been an inspiring omen.

Henry's good knowledge of the contents of the Vulgate raises a number of further questions about the chronicler's art of citation, some of which were mentioned above. For example, to what extent does Henry cite intentionally, and to what extent unintentionally? Leonid Arbusow, who stresses Henry's liturgical perspective on life (Ger. *das Leben im Liturgischen*), deriving from both his appointment as a priest and his psychological lack of sophistication, strongly emphasizes unintentional citation.²⁴ The next question: did Henry

²⁰ Bernard Guenée, *Histoire et culture historique dans l'Occident médiéval* (Paris, 1980), pp. 30–31.

²¹ Cf. Karl Langosch, *Die deutsche Literatur des lateinischen Mittelalters in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung* (Berlin, 1964), pp. 184, 186.

²² Henri Bress, 'Les historiens de la croisade. Guerre sainte, justice et paix', *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome. Moyen Age*, 115/2 (2003), 727–53 (here 738, 742, 746). I am indebted to Dr Marek Tamm for providing me with some newer materials on the subject, this article included.

²³ HCL XXIV.7, pp. 176–7; Brundage, pp. 195–6.

²⁴ Arbusow, *Liturgie*, pp. 80, 87–8.

cite entirely from memory, or did he occasionally access the biblical text and study the passages he quotes? In the case of unintentional citations the issue is uncomplicated: the author cites from memory (from his own point of view, he does not cite at all). Arbusow emphasizes exactly this sort of citation, assuming as he does that Henry was citing the Bible unintentionally: 'Henry, of course, incorporates extracts of the Vulgate from memory and does so to a varying extent, starting with the insertion of full and partial sentences into his text, and finishing with the use of single biblical expressions and various imitations of biblical sayings.'²⁵ Arbusow seeks to affirm his argument by pointing to the fact that exact citations from liturgical books are rare in Henry's text and that even when describing liturgical activities, he uses only the most general expressions, which are frequently also abbreviated or paraphrased.²⁶

Wilis Bilkins, on the other hand, believes in a greater proportion of intentional citation, on the grounds that in Henry's text citations tend to hold important positions and that in significant passages his use of them is especially abundant.²⁷ As to the alteration of citations, according to Bilkins, Henry fairly often alters liturgical formulas of words, but rarely the expressions he borrows from the Vulgate: he usually presents the biblical citation in a form close to the original and often verbatim. Bilkins has carried out an interesting analysis of the ways in which the citations have been altered in the chronicle, giving in the process the impression that Henry was outstandingly professional in the way he manipulated his primary source and skilfully fitted the quotes into the context in which he used them (by adding and replacing names, facts and emphatic words, substituting less well-known vocabulary, inverting negation and affirmation and via other techniques). Therefore, while Arbusow explains the inaccuracy of citations as unintentional, Bilkins's examples rather lead to opposite conclusions.

One can, of course, cite intentionally either from memory or by directly consulting the source: the accuracy of the quote is not the definite criterion here. In general, memory has been considered to play a very important role in the work of medieval historians and, what is more, medieval historians' memory could be described from a modern perspective as extraordinarily advanced.²⁸ As cultural memory was predominantly oral in the Middle Ages,²⁹ this put much higher demands on each carrier of this culture than is the case during an age of print.

²⁵ Arbusow, 'Das entlehnte Sprachgut', p. 109.

²⁶ Arbusow, *Liturgie*, p. 88.

²⁷ Bilkins, *Die Spuren*, pp. 91–2.

²⁸ Guenée, *Histoire et culture historique*, p. 112. Cf. Yevgeni A. Kosminski, *Историография средних веков* (Moscow, 1963), p. 31.

²⁹ See, for example, Paul Zumthor, *Essai de poétique médiévale* (Paris, 1972), p. 38; Paul Zumthor, 'Y a-t-il une "littérature" médiévale?', *Poétique* 66 (1986), 131–41.

Like a folk singer who knows an immense amount of verses by heart, a medieval intellectual kept an enormous number of fragments from the holy texts in his memory. Drawing on this reserve, these were cut into pieces, combined and altered according to the circumstances. Here, intentionality and unintentionality blend unnoticed. Inquiring into the awareness that the Bible is being cited, one ought to note that when constant contact is maintained with Holy Scripture – and without which no chronicle could be a true text – then a basic awareness can exist in parallel with an unawareness of what exactly and with what level of accuracy it is being quoted on every single occasion. However, even though the general constant presence of the Holy Scripture in his chronicle's text is of primary importance for Henry, he also weighs each single citation from Holy Writ with an experienced eye.

Let us try to find a way to judge the validity of the argument sketched above. Bilkins and Arbusow analyse Henry's citations on the morphological, systematic level, which is to say that they identify the citation units, and scrutinize the structural features of every single quote or some bigger quote combination. The semantics and the syntax of citation – the comparison of the respective contexts in the cited text and in the citing text, as well as the function of the citation in the text – have been included in their analysis to a much smaller extent. In the following, an attempt will be made to analyse some citations from Henry's chronicle by adopting the syntactico-semantic perspective.

The Intentionality of Citation

There is a part of the Bible which Henry cites much more than the others, and this is the First Book of Maccabees, the only contemporary source for studying the civil wars in Judaea and one of the most militant texts in the Bible. According to Leonid Arbusow, some 64 different expressions derive from this particular book and they occur in Henry's chronicle 149 times. Indeed, the First Book of the Maccabees was an appropriate source of reference in the situation Henry found himself. However, this was certainly neither his individual choice nor something determined by his biography, as some researchers suppose.

Many early medieval chronicles already viewed the Maccabean wars as an appropriate paradigm for Christian military conflict.³⁰ The Books of Maccabees, seldom remembered in later periods, are fairly commonly cited in the crusading chronicles.³¹ They were also extensively used to depict the conflicts between

³⁰ Nicholas Morton, 'The Defence of the Holy Land and the Memory of the Maccabees', *Journal of Medieval History* 36 (2010), 275–93 (here 278).

³¹ Bresc, 'Les historiens de la croisade', pp. 729, 733–4, 738, 740, 742; Sylvain Gouguenheim, 'Les Maccabées, modèles des guerriers chrétiens des origines au XIIe siècle', *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 54 (2011), 3–20 (here 10ff.).

the Germans and the Slavs.³² The Maccabees constituted one of the main Old Testament prefigurations of the crusaders during the preaching of the First Crusade. However, of all the military orders, it was only the Teutonic Order for whom the Maccabees became central to their self-image.³³ In his bull dated 16 January 1221, Pope Honorius III called the knights of the Teutonic Order the 'new Maccabees in the time of grace' (*novi sub tempore gratiae Macchabei*).³⁴ In the prologue to the revised statutes of the Order (written between 1244 and 1251), it is the Maccabees who provide a direct example of knights fighting against pagans.³⁵ The images of Judas and of Simeon Maccabeus adorned many of the Order's castles. The theme of the Maccabees is also represented in the literary tradition of the Order. Although the Sword Brethren were not yet absorbed into the Teutonic Order, the importance of Maccabaean imagery was evidently known to Henry as well.³⁶

In the following, let us present a few examples of Henry's 'art of citing'. For a start, let us consider the excerpt that characterizes Volquin, the second Master of the Sword Brethren, on the occasion of his appointment to the office after the murder of the previous master in 1209 (the parts of the text deriving from the Bible are given in italics):

(Ia) '*... preliabatur prelia Domini cum leticia et egrediebatur et regrediebatur ad gentes in circuitu. Et adiuuvabant eum omnes fratres eius ...*' ('... *he fought with joy the battles of the Lord, and set out again and again against the heathen tribes in the neighborhood. All his Brothers helped him ...*').³⁷

³² Svetlana I. Luchitskaya, 'Библийские цитаты в хрониках крестовых походов', *Одиссей. Человек в истории* (Moscow, 2003), 65–72 (here 68).

³³ Mary Fischer, 'The Books of the Maccabees and the Teutonic Order', *Crusades* 4 (2005), 59–71 (here 62, 69).

³⁴ Karl Helm and Walther Zisemer, *Die Literatur des Deutschen Ritterordens* (Giessen, 1951), pp. 96–7. Still earlier, Popes Innocent II (1139/1143), Celestine II (1144) and Adrian IV (1157) had described the Knights of the Temple as the 'new Maccabees', and Innocent III informed his audience (1200) that this was 'a new time of the Maccabees'. The phrase 'new Maccabees' was to become a common epithet applied to crusaders (see Fischer, 'The Books of the Maccabees and the Teutonic Order', p. 69; Morton, 'The Defence of the Holy Land and the Memory of the Maccabees', pp. 283 and 287); Gouguenheim, 'Les Maccabées, modèles des guerriers chrétiens des origines au XIIe siècle', p. 16.

³⁵ Fischer, 'The Books of the Maccabees and the Teutonic Order', p. 66.

³⁶ Mary Fischer is of the opinion that 'the Saxon church schools may have seen the Maccabees as a key text, and one which was particularly relevant for that area [the Baltic region – J.U.], even before the arrival of the Teutonic order' (Fischer, 'The Books of the Maccabees and the Teutonic Order', p. 70).

³⁷ HCL XIII.2, p. 68; Brundage, p. 89.

The biblical text in this excerpt derives from a verse that characterizes Judas Maccabeus on the day that he became the leader of the people of Israel after his father's death (the parts of the Bible text used and cited by Henry are given in italics):

(Ib) '*Et adiuuabant eum omnes fratres eius et universi qui se coniunxerant patri eius et proeliabantur proelium Israhel cum laetitia*' (1 Macc. 3:2: '*And all his brethren helped him, and all they that had joined themselves to his father, and they fought with cheerfulness the battle of Israel*').³⁸

As can be seen, the context of the citation in the chronicle is in accordance with the biblical one: the situation from which Henry borrows the citation corresponds exactly to the situation he is describing in the chronicle. Furthermore, the citation has been turned upside down syntactically, also suggesting an analytical approach on the part of the author. In the Bible, *fratres* refers to the brothers of Judas Maccabeus, but in Henry's text it relates to the Sword Brethren. The expression *proelia Domini* (*proelia Israhel* in 1 Macc. 3:2) occurs in the First Book of Kings, which is also the First Book of Samuel (1 Kings 25:28). In Henry's text, one also comes across the expression *ad preliandum prelia Domini*, but it is once again related to the Master of the Sword Brethren, Volquin.³⁹

The second example comes from the eve of the Semgals' and Germans' joint campaign against the Lithuanians when the Semgals wished to cancel the expedition, but the Germans did not agree:

(IIa) '*Sed Theuthonici respondentes dixerunt: "Absit," inquit, "rem hanc facere, ut fugiamus ab eis et inferamus crimen genti nostre. Sed eamus ad adversarios nostros, si poterimus pugnare cum eis"*' ('The Germans replied: "*Let us shun to do this thing, for to flee from them would be to bring reproach upon our people. Let us rather go to meet our adversaries and see if we may fight them*"').⁴⁰

A fragment from this phrase is repeated in the words with which the Livish chieftain Caupo and the Germans turn to the Livs and Lettgallians on the eve of the Battle of Ümera in 1210:

³⁸ All citations from the Bible follow the so-called Douay-Rheims translation of the Latin Vulgate Bible into English, which was produced by Roman Catholic scholars in exile from England at the English College in Douay (then in the Spanish Netherlands but now part of France). The New Testament translation was published in 1582 at Rheims, where the English College had temporarily relocated in 1578. The Old Testament was translated shortly afterward but was not published until 1609–10, in Douay. Bishop Richard Challoner revised it thoroughly between 1749 and 1772. Until 1945 this Douay revision remained the only version of the Bible officially sanctioned for English-speaking Catholics. I cite from the electronic version by Project Gutenberg: <<http://textual.net/access.gutenberg>>.

³⁹ HCL XXVII.1, p. 194.

⁴⁰ HCL XII.2, p. 59; Brundage, p. 80.

(IIb) ‘Sed Caupo cum Theutonicis: “Exspectemus,” inquit, “fratres nostros, et tunc poterimus pugnare et assumptis alis nostris in altum volare”’ (‘But Caupo, together with the Germans, said: “Let us await our Brothers, and then *we will be able to fight*, and, having put on our wings, to fly on high.”’).⁴¹

Immediately thereafter, at the moment the Battle of Ümera breaks out, one of the brothers of the Order says:

(IIc) ‘Tunc Arnoldus frater milicie sumpto vexillo: “*Conveniamus*,” inquit, “fratres Theuthonici, et videamus, *si pugnare queamus*, et *non fugiamus ab eis et non inferamus crimen genti nostre*”’ (‘Then Arnold, a Brother of the Militia, took up a standard and said: “*Let us come together*, brother Germans, and see *if we know how to fight*; *let us not flee from them and thus bring shame upon our people*”’).⁴²

The shared features of all three uses of the quotation are quite significant: firstly, all of them present a German call to arms preceding an unfortunate, lost battle, and secondly, all three use direct speech. Nicholas Morton, incidentally, has called attention to the fact that during the papacies of Innocent III and Honorius III at the beginning of the thirteenth century, Maccabean imagery was employed for new purposes: to coerce and explain failure.⁴³

The respective source text in the Bible has the same two features: here we are dealing with two addresses given by Judas Maccabeus to his army before a battle in which he himself falls; his words are presented in direct speech:

(IId) ‘Et dixit his qui residui erant: “*Surgamus et eamus ad adversarios nostros, si poterimus pugnare adversus eos*.” [...] Et ait Judas: “*Absit istam rem facere, ut fugiamus ab eis*, et si adpropiauit tempus nostrum moriamur in virtute propter fratres nostros *et non inferamus crimen glorie nostrae*”’ (1 Macc. 9:8; 9:10; ‘Then he said to them that remained: “*Let us arise, and go against our enemies, if we may be able to fight against them*.” [...] Then Judas said: “*God forbid we should do this thing, and flee away from them*: but if our time be come, let us die manfully for our brethren, *and let us not stain our glory*”’).

Here, one should not draw too much attention to the variable English translation of the same expressions. Brundage translates the *inferamus crimen genti nostre* in two different ways: ‘[we] bring reproach upon our people’ and ‘[we] bring shame upon our people’. In the Bible, the *inferamus crimen glorie nostrae* is translated as ‘[we] stain our glory’. In the Latin versions, more complex mutations than in the previous cases are perceptible, as verbs and other components vary. The version closest to the Bible is excerpt (IIa), but in this case,

⁴¹ HCL XIV.8, p. 79; Brundage, p. 101.

⁴² HCL XIV.8, p. 79; Brundage, p. 101.

⁴³ Morton, ‘The Defence of the Holy Land and the Memory of the Maccabees’, p. 288.

again, the elements of the citation have been reversed. However, the semantic agreement between the quotes used is remarkable: in all cases, Henry applies the quote in exactly the same situation as in the biblical text. Thus, unintentionality is hardly what is being encountered here. The same point can be made about several other instances where direct speech is used in the chronicle.

Take the most eloquent example from the 16th chapter of the chronicle. These are the words of the Livs who defend the fort of Dobrel, their elder, against the Germans; the words are given in direct speech as if the Livs were speaking to each other.

(IIIa) '*Confortamini*, Lyvones, *et pugnate, ne serviatis Theuthonicis*' ('*Take courage and fight*, Livonians, *lest you come to be servants to the Germans*').⁴⁴

The expression is taken from the First Book of Kings (or the First Book of Samuel), out of the mouth of the Philistines who are getting ready to fight against the Israelites. In the Bible, the Philistines similarly use direct speech.

(IIIb) '*Confortamini et estote viri, Philisthim, ne serviatis Hebraeis ... confortamini et bellate*' (1 Kings 4:9; '*Take courage, and behave like men, ye Philistines: lest you come to be servants to the Hebrews, as they have served you: take courage and fight*').

Once again, the context into which Henry puts the citation fits the original context in the Bible: the Livs (on the whole a force viewed negatively) correspond to the Philistines, the Germans (the positive force) correspond to the Israelites, and the words spoken before a battle are presented in direct speech. Moreover, in both battles – in the Bible as well as in the chronicle – the negative forces at first triumph over the positive ones, but the final result will be the opposite.

The passage is one of the cases in the chronicle where the pagans speak in the words of the Bible. Leonid Arbusow deduces from such cases a certain naivety on Henry's part and a lack of linguistic competence. According to him, Henry does not pay attention to the expression's original context – he has forgotten it and cites the expression from memory.⁴⁵ However, as we see in the example given above, the context was not forgotten and has been precisely chosen by the chronicler. Typologically, Henry is brilliant. Arbusow's authority – which has been taken for granted – exerts a strong influence on researchers. Even Enn Tarvel, who prepared the Latin-Estonian academic edition of the chronicle, claims in one of his articles that it is a misplaced usage of language that the pagans are made to speak in the words of the Bible in the chronicle.⁴⁶ By the way, one of Tarvel's examples is the same sentence we were just analysing.

⁴⁴ HCL XVI.4, p. 108; Brundage, p. 127 (my translation – J.U.).

⁴⁵ Arbusow, *Liturgie*, p. 80.

⁴⁶ Enn Tarvel, 'Henrik ja tema aeg', in *Religiooni ja ateismi ajaloo Eestis. Artiklite kogumik*, vol. 3, ed. Jüri Kivimäe (Tallinn, 1987), pp. 7–32 (here 11). Cf. also Joseph de

In this case, however, we have convincing evidence of Henry's fully intentional and careful handling of the biblical citation. He not only pays attention to the original context from which he chooses his expression, but he has a good command of the stylistic context of his own chronicle as well. One can say that he is not only semantically correct but also syntactically correct. Let us have a look at the tenth chapter of the chronicle, in which the Germans are attacking the Livish fort being defended by Dobrel once more (chronologically, this happens before the events in the previously examined citation). So, we are dealing with the same fort as in the previous instance and the result of the battle is again positive from the viewpoint of the Livs, because the Germans are not able to take the fort. And this is how the chronicler tells us what happened before this battle:

(IIIc) 'Confortabat enim eos Dabrelus, senior ipsorum, et animabat, quemadmodum Philistei quondam dicentes: "*Confortamini, Philistiim, et pugnate, ne serviatis Hebreis*"' ('Dobrel, their elder, comforted and encouraged them, saying, as the Philistines once did: "*Take courage and fight, ye Philistines, lest you come to be servants to the Hebrews*"').⁴⁷

Thus it is Henry himself who gives us the exact reference to the scriptural passage (1 Kings 4:9 cited above). The Livs behave like Philistines before a battle that ends victoriously for them in both cases, the chronicle thus mirroring the Bible once more. And not only that. Henry uses the same biblical expression to identify the same geographical place and the same people, namely the Livs in Dobrel's fort, in a situation similar to the other passage in which the citation occurs. Therefore, firstly, he is manipulating the biblical text in a careful and deliberate manner. Secondly, he uses the same expressions in similar situations, not because he lacks words, but because of his typological thinking. This is exactly what is called typology in the study of medieval texts: a tendency to find generalizing types for profane persons and events in the sacred history, or in other words in the text of the Bible. Profane history – all that happened before his very eyes – provided the historian with individual events and persons. The sacred history, the Word of God, the Bible, the revelation of the whole course of history in a single book – this provided the historian with the universal, everlasting view of human behaviour and situations. He had to assemble his contemporaries according to biblical types. The task of the historian was to find correspondences – correspondences between what he himself saw, on the one hand, and the eternal types given in the Bible on the other, that is, correspondences between his own text and the divine one. This was his, so to say, scientific task. If

Ghellinck, *L'essor de la littérature latine au XII^e siècle*, 2 vols (Brussels and Paris, 1946), vol. 2, p. 134 (to be sure, Ghellinck's knowledge of Henry is evidently poor).

⁴⁷ HCL X.10, p. 40; Brundage, p. 61.

Henry manages to find some proper, convincing biblical expression for Dobrel and his Livish people – expressions representing a universal situation – then he can be considered successful in the writing of history. Then he is a real and truthful historian. These kinds of correspondences are as important for him as economic, sociological, biological and other such categories of evidence are for us in understanding what happens in the world.

The example of Dobrel and the Livs is a revealing one in the study of Henry's art of citation. He also presents other occasions on which pagans use the words of the Bible in direct speech and, as far as I can decide, most of these cases are typologically well grounded.

For instance, it is not contradictory that one of the Lithuanian opponents, Svelgate, uses in his speech an expression from Benadad, king of Syria, who was hostile towards Israel (Cf. 3 Kings 20:10),⁴⁸ or that the tricky Livs of Holm who have outwitted the bishop speak against him with the words of Judas Iscariot (Cf. Matt. 26:49).⁴⁹ In a way, context also gives good reasons for the women of the Estonian county Jerwen (Est. Järvamaa), pleasing to Henry, to repeat the words the imprisoned Apostle Paul said to the high priest of the Jews. The women cite the Apostle immediately after they are released from captivity: 'The Jerwanian women, whom the Oeselians had taken captive, rushed out and struck the already-stricken Oeselians with clubs, saying: "*May the God of the Christians smite you!*"' (Cf. Acts 23:3).⁵⁰

However, it is of interest to note that Prince Vsevolod of Gerzike (Latv. Jersika), who in the chronicle is called 'an enemy of the Christian name',⁵¹ when looking at his burning city that has been set on fire by the Germans, laments in the words of a priest related to the Maccabees: 'The king saw the burning from the other side of the Dvina, heaved a great sigh, bewailed with huge groans, and exclaimed: "O Gerzika beloved city! *O inheritance of my fathers!* O unexpected downfall of my people! *O woe is me! Why was I born to see the burning of my city and the sorrow of my people!*"' (Cf. 1 Macc. 15:33, 2:7).⁵² Is the ennobling citation a means by which Henry expresses his unbiased compassion for Vsevolod? There is another linguistic argument that speaks in favour of Vsevolod, namely the word *letus* ('happy') occurring in the same passage, which shall be examined in the last section of this chapter. There are more examples of this kind. In some cases, they leave no doubt about Henry's Christian sympathy for the sorrow of the pagan peoples, as for instance when he compares the cruelly murdered

⁴⁸ HCL IX.1, p. 26.

⁴⁹ HCL I.11, p. 6.

⁵⁰ HCL XXIII. 9, p. 166; Brundage, p. 185.

⁵¹ HCL XIII.4, p. 69; Brundage, p. 90.

⁵² HCL XIII.4, p. 70; Brundage, p. 92.

Estonians to Rachel's perished children: 'Estonia, too, *wept for her sons and could not be comforted*, for they were lost, both here and in the future life ...' (Cf. Matt. 2:18, Jer. 31:15).⁵³

In general, the transfers of direct speech from the Bible which are semantically most sensitive seem to be correct. On the other hand, in the parts of the text more oriented towards storytelling, Henry can be a bit looser with citing. But here too one must always be careful: a seemingly unsuitable citation can turn out to be a stylistically accurate allusion to Henry's attitude. For instance, in the chronicle the expression *cor et anima una* (Acts 4:32; 'one heart and one soul') is applied three times and on one occasion it occurs in the following formulation: 'Then the Esthonians, taunting the Christians, returned to their country and sent men through all the provinces to persuade them to swear and join together with *one heart and mind* against the Christian name'.⁵⁴ In the New Testament, the expression 'one heart and mind' characterizes the unity of the early Christian congregation and thus its suitability for reflecting the unanimity of pagans seems to be slightly dubious. Nevertheless, if we take into account the fact that the Estonians were 'taunting the Christians' (*improperantes christianis*), or in other words using Christian rhetoric against the Christians themselves, then all the pieces fall into place.

Thus, Henry shows remarkable and sometimes even scholarly strictness in citing. Before inserting a citation in his text he finds a well-corresponding analogue in the Bible for the situation which he describes (not excluding those he finds by browsing his memory). At the same time, Henry also takes into account the formal characteristics of the texts (direct speech remains direct speech, for instance). These observations enable the thesis that Henry cites unintentionally and because of his lack of linguistic competence to be challenged.

The Authoritativeness of Citation

Let us consider a figurative conclusion that follows a description of Estonians' violence against their neighbours:

Et condolebat eis tota ecclesia, que tunc erat tamquam arcturus, qui semper tenditur et numquam frangitur, tamquam *archa Noe*, que magnis quidem fluctibus *elevatur*, sed non alliditur, *navicula Petri*, que undis quatitur, sed non submergitur, *mulier*, quam *draco persequitur*, sed non opprimit. ('The church,

⁵³ HCL XVIII.5, p. 119; Brundage, p. 138.

⁵⁴ HCL XIV.8, p. 80; Brundage, p. 102.

indeed, was like Arcturus, always pummeled but never broken; like the ark of Noah, raised up by great billows but not crushed; like the bark of Peter, shaken by waves but not submerged; like a woman whom the dragon followed but did not overtake.)⁵⁵

In this sentence, there are references to three different books of the Bible and to three well-known symbolic situations; however, the parts of the sentence given in italics above are not exact citations, but adaptations. Firstly, let us ascertain that with the help of the Bible, Henry accumulates comparisons that characterize the activity of the Church. On this level, he acts as the figurative decorator of the text. Yet, the rhetorical accomplishment does more than just magnify the aesthetic impression. It also gives, via the text of the Bible, an authoritative judgement on the immaculate nature of the Livonian church. Thus Henry uses biblical situations not only to make his narrative more vivid, but also to project the events taking place in Livonia onto the background of the Bible's sacred stories; he mythologizes them – he turns the everyday into the world of eternal truths.

Therefore we can also speak of a citation's authoritative function. In medieval writing, authoritative citation has a crucial role to play: 'By all possible means the text refers to what is considered *auctoritas* and what it inserts into itself in the form of citation ...';⁵⁶ '... a reference to the Holy Scripture is already a proof, an argument; the authority of the Holy Scripture was unique, the citations from it solved not only ecclesiastical, but also historical special questions.'⁵⁷ In the chronicle, citation and authority are closely interwoven; one is the doorstep for the transition to the other. In Henry's text one can note many relatively simple and often repeated biblical formulae, which do not have a great rhetorical value, but which help Henry unwearyingly and unnoticeably turn everything that is happening in Livonia into activities taking place at a higher ideological level. It is exactly here that we find an explanation for the multiplicity of biblical citations in the chronicle. Was Henry indeed linguistically so incapable that he had to borrow from the Bible and repeat – with minor variations – tens of times such simple expressions as *tulerunt spolia multa* (2 Chron. 14:13; 'they took abundance of spoils') or *reversi sunt in terram suam* (4 Kings 3:27; 'returned into their own country')? In all likelihood, the reason for such behaviour lies not in linguistic incapability but in a special sense of life within which all temporal diversity is reducible to a set of timeless linguistic expressions. Authoritative biblical citation

⁵⁵ HCL XIV.8, p. 80; Brundage, p. 102.

⁵⁶ Zumthor, *Essai de poétique médiévale*, p. 35.

⁵⁷ Kosminski, *Историография*, p. 29.

has an important role in Henry's text – such citation is a prerequisite for the text's ability to create theological-philosophical generalizations. In a chronicle, a biblical citation gives the reader a hint about how one ought to transform a particular quotidian event into a sentence that belongs to the level of normative generalizations.

Referring to Henry's tendency towards a stereotypical and schematic mode of expression, Leonid Arbusow has asked: 'Perhaps one could assume that this endless reappearance of the same or very similar text segments and expressions can at least partly be explained with medieval stylistics' requirement of *copia verborum*, the principle of excessive expression and semantic *crecendo* (the rule of "amplification")?'⁵⁸ Characteristically, Arbusow stops at rhetorical functionality when seeking explanations. The rhetorical horizon has been most clearly fixed by Paul Zumthor, who in his studies of medieval literature places the main emphasis on the concept of tradition: 'This poetry is characterized by a great allusive energy, yet at the same time also by relatively poor vocabulary ... The text creates the surface, the tradition is located in the invisible abysses of the poetic space.'⁵⁹

Thus we can ascertain that on the rhetorical level, the reason for Henry's linguistic poverty lies in the particularities of medieval aesthetic communication, for which Yuri Lotman has used the concept of identity aesthetics. An artwork belonging to the sphere of identity aesthetics can be described as a system that processes the poetic material according to the following principle: A' is A, A'' is A, A''' is A, and so on.⁶⁰ In other words, a text discovers in its continuously new variants one and the same originating idea. In a system like this, art is born out of the creator's ability to find ever new interpretations and application opportunities for the invariant (A). A good example is the Italian *commedia dell'arte*, the popular theatre of the Renaissance period, within which improvisations were set in a firm framework of masks and stock situations. On stage, an actor always played a type with a certain fixed character, some invariant (such as Pantalone, a Venetian merchant) operating in a fixed invariant situation (the seduction of a young lady, for instance), yet freely varied them during each performance.

Yet, first and foremost we need to remind ourselves once again of the typological way of thinking which so characterized the Middle Ages. Its backbone lies in the idea that certain historical events give an ex-ante form for future events, by which they also attain their perfection and fulfilment.⁶¹ Or,

⁵⁸ Arbusow, 'Das entlehnte Sprachgut', p. 111.

⁵⁹ Zumthor, *Essai de poétique médiévale*, p. 80.

⁶⁰ Yuri M. Lotman, *Структура художественного текста* (Moscow, 1970), pp. 351–3.

⁶¹ Hannelore Sachs, Ernst Badstübner and Helga Neumann, *Erklärendes Wörterbuch zur Christlichen Kunst* (Hanau, s.a.), p. 347.

to put it more simply, typology means the understanding of past events as types foretoking other, future events.⁶² The starting point for typology is the understanding and interpretation of the New and Old Testament through each other. The Old Testament was treated as a prefiguration of the sacred history which gained its final form via the New Testament. Thus, one could not correctly understand the Old Testament without knowing the New Testament, and the religious innovation of the New Testament revealed itself only against the background of the Old Testament. The maxim for this was found in the words of Christ's sermon upon the mount: 'Do not think that I am come to destroy the law [of the Old Testament], or the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil' (Matt. 5:17). The pioneer of the typological way of thinking was St Paul the Apostle, who in his Epistle to the Romans named Adam, the first man, as a prefiguring of Christ (Gk. *typos tou mellontos*, Lat. *forma futuri*): '... Adam, who is a figure of him who was to come' (Romans 5:14). Later interpreters of the Bible continued to view the characters and situations of the Old Testament as certain fixed 'types', to whom respective 'antitypes' in the New Testament corresponded as their fulfilments:⁶³ Eve and Mary, Joseph and Jesus Christ, Samson and Jesus Christ, Lea/Rachel and Martha/Mary, the garden of Eden and Mount Calvary, the crossing of the Red Sea and the redeeming blood of Christ, and so on.⁶⁴ Erich Auerbach speaks of a type or a 'figure' (Ger. *Figur*) as 'phenomenal prophecy' (Ger. *Realprophetie*), stressing that within the boundaries of Christian concepts it is as real a historical event as its later fulfilment; thus it is not a mere sign or symbol.⁶⁵ This is a good example of Christianity's endeavour to amalgamate historical and mythical, linear and cyclic perceptions of time (for an elaboration of this idea, see the last section of this chapter).

⁶² Johan Chydenius, *The Typological Problem in Dante: A Study in the History of Medieval Ideas* (Helsinki, 1958), p. 11.

⁶³ In the New Testament, the Greek word *antitypos* is typologically used only once in the First Epistle of St Peter (1 Peter 3:21). The salvation of Noah and his family through the waters of the flood is there represented as a type of the salvation of the Christian through the waters of baptism (Chydenius, *The Typological Problem*, p. 18).

⁶⁴ Max Wehrli, *Literatur im deutschen Mittelalter: Eine poetologische Einführung* (Stuttgart, 1984), p. 244. A general introduction is given in Friedrich Ohly, 'Typologie als Denkform der Geschichtsbetrachtung', in *Typologie: Internationale Beiträge zur Poetik*, ed. Volker Bohn (Frankfurt am Main, 1988), pp. 22–63. In English, the best-known book on biblical typology is Northrop Frye, *The Great Code: The Bible and Literature* (London and Melbourne, 1982).

⁶⁵ Erich Auerbach, *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur romanischen Philologie* (Bern and Munich, 1967), pp. 65–92; Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: Dargestellte Wirklichkeit in der abendländischen Literatur*, 2nd edn (Bern, 1959), pp. 74–7.

The typological way of thinking reached beyond the bounds of the Bible, and comparisons emerged between the heroes of the sacred story and other mythological and biblical characters. Friedrich Ohly has suggested that typologies with one half located outside the Bible be called half-biblical typologies (Ger. *halbbiblische Typologie*). Examples include the typological likening of Orpheus or Socrates with Christ, as well as the comparison between Constantine the Great and King Solomon.⁶⁶ What is involved is the secularization of the typology, its application to material supplied by history rather than sacred events.⁶⁷ The chronicler Henry thinks and makes his historical generalizations in the same kind of half-biblical typologies.

Henry himself offers a fine proof of his intentionally typological way of thinking when describing a play, which was presumably organized by Bishop Albert in Riga in the winter of 1205.⁶⁸ This is also the first reference to a theatrical performance in the Baltic region:

That same winter a very elaborate play of the prophets was performed in the middle of Riga in order that the pagans might learn the rudiments of the Christian faith by an ocular demonstration. The subject of this play was most diligently explained to both converts and pagans through an interpreter. When, however, the army of Gideon fought the Philistines, the pagans began to take flight, fearing lest they be killed, but they were quietly called back.⁶⁹

Here Henry probably confuses Gideon and David, as Gideon actually fought against the Midianites (cf. Judges 7). The pagans regarded the play as something with an exact correspondence to the events they had experienced in real life: they took it not as a typological allegory but at face value, making an attempt to flee from the performance. Such a response was not rare in the Middle Ages; for instance, it is known that in 1322 a count of Thuringia died of fright while watching a biblical play.⁷⁰ More importantly, however, Henry's own explanation also clearly emphasizes the performance's typological nature: as an excerpt (citation) from the sacred history it showed *ex ante* what was soon going to happen in Livonia:

⁶⁶ Friedrich Ohly, *Schriften zur mittelalterlichen Bedeutungsforschung* (Darmstadt, 1977), p. 366.

⁶⁷ Spiegel, 'Historical Thought', p. 84; Bresc, 'Les historiens de la croisade', p. 730.

⁶⁸ For a more detailed discussion of this scene, see Chapter 9 by Nils Holger Petersen in this volume.

⁶⁹ HCL IX.14, p. 32; Brundage, p. 53.

⁷⁰ Lutz Mackensen, *Zur deutschen Literatur Altivlands* (Würzburg, 1961), pp. 15, 19–20.

This play was like a prelude and prophecy of the future; for in the same play there were wars, namely those of David, Gideon, and Herod, and there was the doctrine of the Old and New Testaments. Certainly, through the many wars that followed, the pagans were to be converted and, through the doctrine of the Old and New Testaments, they were to be told how they might attain to the true Peacemaker and eternal life.⁷¹

During the High Middle Ages, the conceptualization of the world via certain fixed formulation templates, types of characters and situations and similar things was common in all genres.⁷² One of the earliest introductory accounts of Henry in Estonian poignantly underlines this principle as central to Henry's life perception and principles of text-making: 'He speaks not only of that what happened in one, or another single instance, and what thus made the occurrence important, but while narrating each occurrence also draws upon other similar events. ... Moreover, mostly the same sayings and modes have been used for all similar occurrences, so that the narratives seem to have been made as if according to the same form.'⁷³ Evidently it makes sense to measure Henry's rhetorical mastery not according to the number of clichéd expressions in his text, but according to the context into which he places the cliché. To concentrate our attention on the annoyingly repetitive biblical citation (invariant) and to state that the invariant does not vary (which indeed an invariant must not do) would mean fixing our attention on the wrong thing and essentially giving up analysis.

For instance, let us consider the expression *mare magnum et spatiosum* ('this great sea, which stretcheth wide its arms'), which derives from the hymn to Jehovah and exemplifies the miraculous nature of the Lord's work (Psalms 103:25). Henry uses the expression twice in the accusative together with the preposition *in*, yet the two situations described are loaded with completely different evaluations: on one occasion, the great sea signifies for him the love of the Virgin Mary, but on the other it becomes the sign of her vengeance.

(IVa) 'Et obedivimus omnes et traximus, donec transitis difficultatibus *in mare magnum et spatiosum* pervenimus' ('We all obeyed and pulled until, after passing the difficulties, we came *onto the wide and spacious sea*').⁷⁴

⁷¹ HCL IX.14, p. 32; Brundage, p. 53.

⁷² See, for example, Zumthor, *Essai de poétique médiévale*, pp. 82–96; Ludwig Bieler, *Zur Interpretation hagiographischer Parallelen* (Heidelberg, 1974); W.L. Warren, 'Biography and the Medieval Historian', in *Medieval Historical Writing in the Christian and Islamic Worlds*, ed. D.O. Morgan (London, 1982), pp. 5–18 (here 7–8).

⁷³ Matthias Johann Eisen, 'Läti Hindrek ja tema ajaraamat', in *Tähtsad mehed. Kuues anne*, ed. M.J. Eisen (Tartu, 1884), pp. 31–2.

⁷⁴ HCL XIX.5, p. 129; Brundage, p. 149 (my translation – J.U.).

(IVb) 'Et [Godescalcus – J.U.] recessit ipse confusus a Lyvoniam venitque in mare magnum et spatiosum et ibat sine rectore navis et proiectus est a vento contrario' ('Gottschalk went away discomfited from Livonia and came *onto the wide and spacious sea*. He was going without a pilot in his ship and was tossed about by a contrary wind').⁷⁵

The psalm from which the expression cited has been extracted (Psalms 103:25) similarly depicts the sea as two-faced: 'there the ships shall go' to the distant shores, yet there also lives the giant monster symbolizing primordial chaos – the 'sea dragon which thou hast formed to play therein'. Therefore Henry's *mare magnum et spatiosum* can be considered a strong invariant, a symbol of the Creator's omnipotence that encompasses the whole scale of divine providence.

In this way the biblical sentences also function in the chronicle as cognitive invariants in a broader sense. They revive the theological scheme which was generally well known to the medieval audience, yet are also a reminder of that which a man with a priest's vocation considered his everyday duty in the crusade's unsteady circumstances. Of course, a single citation cannot sum up the whole conception; even more so, not even the huge collection of citations that Henry has dissolved into his text is meant to create a theological whole – because for Henry and his audience the whole already exists *a priori*. But according to the principle *pars pro toto*, each single citation as well as the body of them represents the Bible's historico-philosophical authority, activating again and again the knowledge that each Christian must carry within him- or herself.

Profane and Sacred History

A discussion on the authoritative biblical citations' leading role in Henry's text and biblical citation as a divine invariant inevitably leads to the concepts of profane history (*historia profana*) and sacred history (*historia sacra*). Profane history is history on its secular level, events of everyday life, human passions, war and peace, all that happened in early thirteenth-century Livonia. Sacred history, on the other hand, is the Christian plan of world history in which everything is determined, from the beginning (the Creation) to the end of times (the Last Judgement), and in the centre of which stands Christ's salvation. This is a universal scheme in which 'on the one hand, the religious myth of Christianity becomes actualized in each moment of the worldly history ..., but [which], on the other hand, functions as the ultimate exegete of the course of the real, i.e.

⁷⁵ HCL XXV.2, p. 178; Brundage, p. 197–8.

observable ("profane") history'.⁷⁶ 'Sacred history is the history of the world, the history of the humankind, which content is all at once and always exposed in the Bible.'⁷⁷ Therefore profane history and sacred history do not represent two autonomous courses of events, but a continuously growing sequence of earthly events, striving for fulfilment, with the ever-specifying meaning that is given to man through the revelation.

Although in different medieval chronicles the relationship between the sacred and the profane ways of seeing history varies and the sacred facet of history is sometimes not explicit, yet on the theoretical level it was generally accepted that dealing with profane history was not proper at all for a cleric.⁷⁸ Only a chronicle of events that were set against the background of the sacred could claim historical truth in its full meaning. 'Everyone knew in the Middle Ages that what comes, comes from the will of God. The noble task of history was to set down in writing the deeds of God, *gesta Dei*. History was quintessentially religious. ... It makes manifest the concealedness of the divine.'⁷⁹ The task of a historian was to lift the affairs of profane history into the light of the divine lamp, organize them according to the sacred scheme, and add the exegetical universals. When a monastery's chronicler started the history of his brotherhood from the birth of Christ, then the reason for this lay in the wish to view earthly things from the perspective of divine causality, which was natural in the Middle Ages.⁸⁰

In Henry's chronicle too, the two narratives are merged together. The course of universal history is reflected through these very particular events that took place in the Baltic region at the beginning of the thirteenth century. Remember the first sentence of the chronicle. This hints at the irrefutable scheme of sacred history that explains everything happening in Livonia, as well as elsewhere: 'Divine Providence, by the fire of His love, and mindful of Raab and Babylonia, that is, of the confusion of paganism, aroused in our modern times the idolatrous Livonians from the sleep of idolatry and of sin in the following way.'⁸¹ At the very moment that Henry begins to tell the story of pagan Livonia, the old stories of pagan Egypt (Raab) and pagan Babylon are called to mind as well. Livonia is only one instance in an eternal battle between orthodox and pagan belief

⁷⁶ Mikhail A. Barg, *Эпохи и идеи: Становление историзма* (Moscow, 1987), p. 84.

⁷⁷ Barg, *Эпохи и идеи*, p. 190.

⁷⁸ Helmut Beumann, 'Widukind von Korvei als Geschichtsschreiber und seine politische Gedankenwelt', in *Geschichtsdenken und Geschichtsbild im Mittelalter: Ausgewählte Aufsätze und Arbeiten aus den Jahren 1933 bis 1959*, ed. Walther Lammers (Darmstadt, 1961), pp. 135–64 (here 143).

⁷⁹ Guenée, *Histoire et culture historique*, p. 29.

⁸⁰ Brincken, *Studien zur lateinischen Weltchronistik*, p. 38.

⁸¹ HCL I.1, pp. 1–2; Brundage, p. 25.

systems. In the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia, the two stories run parallel to each other from the beginning to the end.

Considering the sacred level of history, the aforementioned early Estonian account of Henry's chronicle writes most accurately that there the German crusaders are 'like the men of Gideon, because even though they are few, God has made great things through them. According to him [Henry] they seem like a second people of Israel; the city of Riga is the city of God; the German warriors are the warriors of the Lord, who fight God's fights.'⁸² In a now forgotten article from 1929 (which Henri Bresc calls prophetic), the French historian Paul Alphandéry interprets the histories of the First Crusade (1096–99) along the same lines: in those texts, it is precisely through biblical citations that the crusaders are portrayed as the ancient people of Israel. On the one hand, a biblical citation legitimizes the deeds of the crusaders; on the other hand, it gives those deeds a manifold meaning.⁸³ This was not only post-factum textual reconstruction. Even the crusades themselves could be considered sacred history.⁸⁴ In that case the profane side of history disappeared altogether, and a participant in the crusades as if directly stepped into the sacred time and identified himself with a biblical character. That being the case, the crusade was a rupture in profane time, an entrance into sacred time and space (cf. entering into a temple), participating in the text of Holy Scripture. In their emotional peak experiences, the crusaders and the chroniclers who were writing about them probably really felt that way. Yet, historiography has mostly attended to the paralleling, or mixing, of the narratives of the profane and sacred history according to the vision of St Augustine: before the end of time, the histories of the two cities (the city of God and the earthly city of man) remain intermixed, as they are in struggle with each other.

Thus, for a medieval cleric a component of the sacred text in his chronicle, a citation, remained a phenomenon which was far from being solely linguistic. The word of Holy Scripture was living, magical word; the transfer of it was equal to the transfer of holiness itself. Similarly, for instance, a translation of a hagiographical text, a saint's life from one language to another did not so much express a pure textual transmission as the real reappearance of the saint him- or herself in a new environment.⁸⁵ While a hagiography as a manifestation of the existence of the holy functions just like a relic, then a biblical citation is a true fragment from sacred history. Using sacred citations within the text created a field of tension between the sacred and the profane aspect, which

⁸² Eisen, 'Läti Hindrek ja tema ajaraamat', p. 36.

⁸³ Cf. Bresc, 'Les historiens de la croisade', pp. 729–30.

⁸⁴ Luchitskaya, 'Библиейские цитаты', p. 65.

⁸⁵ Evelyn Birge Vitz, 'Vie, légende, littérature: Traditions orales et écrites dans les histoires des saints', *Poétique* 72 (1987), 387–402 (here 394).

had both a historico-philosophical and an ethical function. According to St Thomas Aquinas (1225–74), a hidden spiritual purpose cannot be found in any product of human handiwork, as the sole holder of this purpose is the Holy Scripture born from the Holy Spirit.⁸⁶ Yet the description of things using the words of Holy Scripture opened perspectives towards the higher truth in them. This higher truth or spiritual meaning can occur in a text in three forms, namely in allegorical, tropological (moral) and anagogical form. Together with literal or historical meaning, there were four potential meanings of a text, which are summarized well by a Latin gnomic rhyme:

Littera gesta docet, quid credas allegoria,
 Moralis quis agas, quo tendas anagogia.⁸⁷
 ('Literal meaning teaches what happened, allegory – what to believe,
 moral meaning – what to do, and for what you strive – anagogic.')

'These citations caught the eye just because the biblical citations were so well-known, yet as they were considered sacred texts this always resulted in a tense relationship between the sacred text B [= the cited text, or supporting text] that is considered truthful and the text that next to it seems like its "secular" interpretation, the almost "fictive" text A [= the citing text] ...'⁸⁸ Erich Auerbach has written of the struggle between the Vulgate and the main text in the works of St Augustine and other Church Fathers.⁸⁹ A medieval cleric cannot escape this polarity. However, the more triumphantly Henry is able to derive the sacred scheme from everything happening on Earth, the more convincing his text becomes.⁹⁰ Unlike many medieval universal histories, he does not retell sacred history, nor does he elevate his writing with historico-philosophical monumentalism in the style of Otto of Freising. Yet the 'latent sacredness'⁹¹ inherent in medieval texts also characterizes his chronicle. The main source of this sacredness is the biblical citation. It is not by accident that in 1740 the

⁸⁶ Chydenius, *The Typological Problem*, p. 43.

⁸⁷ Quoted in Ohly, *Schriften*, p. 17.

⁸⁸ Hans-Ulrich Simon, 'Zitat', in *Reallexikon der deutschen Literaturgeschichte*, vol. 4, ed. Klaus Kanzog and Achim Masser (Berlin and New York, 1984), p. 1061.

⁸⁹ Auerbach, *Mimesis*, p. 77.

⁹⁰ Cf. 'His chronicle is thus a progressively unfolding providential drama in which the true church finally emerges triumphant above her many foes symbolized in the Satanic dragon of the apocalypse.' Peter Aukst, 'Henry of Livonia and Balthasar Russow: The Chronicler as Literary Artist', *JBS* 6/2–3 (1975), 107–19 (here 108).

⁹¹ Zumthor, *Essai de poétique médiévale*, p. 107.

first printed version of Henry's chronicle was published under the title *Origines Livoniae sacrae et civilis*⁹²

So the solution to the emphatic 'biblical' style of the chronicle lies in general typological thinking. Every individual event is a representative of some universal constellation. The types of events are predetermined by the Bible. The two stories run parallel: the confused events of everyday life and the settled types of universal history.

The attention which scholars have paid to the two narratives is very different. Henry's chronicle is highly esteemed and relatively well examined as a source for early Baltic history. Conversely, the chronicle's status as a typically medieval attempt to reflect upon the universal course of the history of mankind has been neglected. Why? Because, perhaps, as modern scholars, we have no practical interest in so-called universal histories, or stories, which try to generalize the meaning of history from its beginnings up to the end of mankind. The universal frame of history, the heavenly speculations, are of no scientific value. We are not able to believe that history has any definite meaning, or, at least, that we could grasp this meaning very precisely. In this sense, almost every modern historian is a successor of the German-Jewish philosopher Theodor Lessing, according to whose major work history is 'giving meaning to the meaningless'.⁹³ There are exceptions, of course – for example, clerical philosophers or orthodox Marxists.

Nevertheless, it should be stressed that the study of biblical citations in the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia is necessary if one is interested in the whole meaning of situations and persons which Henry depicts. To follow the profane story alone would result in missing the nuances between the lines. Paying somewhat closer attention to the sacred dimension of the story can reveal ambivalence towards persons and events that at first sight seem to be problem-free.

Myth of Eternal Return to Home?

In conclusion, let us analyse the stylistic variations of the chronicle's much-repeated verbal motif of *reversi sunt in terram suam* (for example, 4 Kings 3:27; 'returned into their own country'). One can count almost 65 different

⁹² *Origines Livoniae sacrae et civilis, seu chronicon Livonicum vetus* ..., ed. Daniel Gruber (Frankfurt and Leipzig, 1740). This kind of title, of course, was the custom of those times; cf. Augustin Calmet, *Histoire universelle, sacrée et profane depuis le commencement du monde jusqu'à nos jours*, 8 vols (Strasbourg, 1735–47); J. Hardion, *Histoire universelle, sacrée et profane*, 18 vols (Paris, 1754–65), and so on.

⁹³ Theodor Lessing, *Geschichte als Sinngebung des Sinnlosen* (Munich, 1919).

instances of this in the chronicle; yet its usage is quite strictly regulated. Mostly, the 'return into their land, or to home' is the privilege of Christian missionaries, especially if the people return home 'with joy'. Pagans are not intended to rejoice. So a simple verbal unit can be the bearer of important ideological values.

The expression reflects one of the mythical invariants Henry was most attached to: the happy return to home after battles fought abroad. In most cases, this is expressed with a sentence made up of the words from the Bible or the Breviary. In the different books of the Bible, there are quite a few kindred phrases: in the Third Book of Kings (3 Kings 22:17 and 22:36), in the Fourth Book of Kings (4 Kings 3:27), in the Book of Ezra (Ezra 2:1), in the Book of Tobias (Tob. 5:27), in the Book of Judith (Judith 16:25), in the Book of Jeremiah (Jer. 51:9), in the Second Book of Maccabees (2 Macc. 15:28), in the Gospel of Luke (Luke 10:17), and the Gospel of John (John 7:53). The range of Henry's combinations can be fixed with the following joint structure (see Figure 2.1).

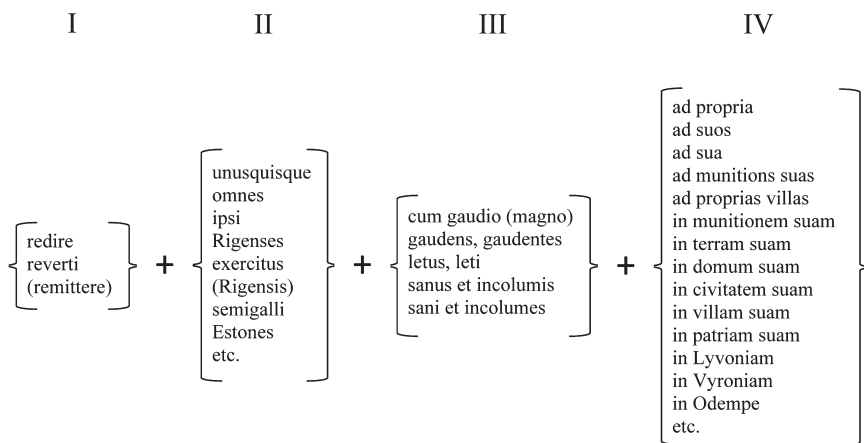


Figure 2.1 The combinations of the narrative structure 'the happy return to home' in the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia

Although this structure does not exhaust all nuances, it still gives a generalized picture of the combination chain used by Henry. The first, verbal, link in the structure is narrowly delimited; here Henry predominantly uses the verbs *reverti* ('return') and *redire* ('go back, return'). The transitive verb *remittere* ('send back') also appears a few times. In these cases the second link of the structure (subject) is altered into an object and a new subject is incorporated into the expression (for

example, *episcopus ... remisit Semigallos cum gaudio in terram suam*, 'The bishop ... with joy sent the Semgalls back to their country').⁹⁴ Of course, this four-member structure does not always occur in its full form with these expressions; the third link in the structure is, for instance, often missing due to certain ideological reasons. It is probably only once that the verb in the structure occurs in the negative form, but here too the reason lies in semantic exceptionality.

In the chronicle, the expressions formed according to the structure presented above mostly describe the activity of the German crusaders and their allies: returning home dominantly is the prerogative of the Christian missionaries. Yet in its neutral, fact-stating aspect of meaning, the motif repeatedly also extends to the opposite camp. At times, the Livs who have broken faith with the Germans also 'return home', as do the unbaptized Estonians and even the Russians, whose schismatic Christianity is not of full value in Henry's eyes.

Of course, it is only natural that almost all groups who appear in Henry's chronicle at one time or another *have to* return to their base from campaigns or visits. After all, we are talking about a part of everyday life and – what is more – so regular a feature of the medieval style of warfare that it seems absolutely impossible to avoid mentioning it. As a descriptive motif, 'return home' is one of the building blocks of Henry's narrative. Nevertheless, something else is more important.

This is the fact that the motif tends to acquire an ideological tone, and its descriptive effect pales in comparison. Let us give a few examples. On probably the only occasion when the expression occurs in a negative form (*ne redirent in terram suam*, 'that they might not return to their own land'),⁹⁵ it is applied to the Lithuanians who have been defeated in battle by the Germans. In the chronicle, 'returning home' is sometimes also associated with negative emotional judgement, which would not be possible in a depiction of the Germans. The Estonians who have been defeated by the Germans at the Ümera River (Latv. Jumara) return home 'shamefully' (*cum pudore reversi sunt in terram suam*, 'shamefully returned to their land');⁹⁶ the people of Novgorod, who have learned of their kinsmen's wreck and ruin at the defence of the Dorpat (Est. Tartu) stronghold, return to their city 'with violent sorrow and indignation' (*cum dolore vehementi et indignatione reversi sunt in civitatem suam*, 'they returned to their city with violent sorrow and indignation').⁹⁷ By the way, a few lines above in the same passage, the victorious crusaders return to Livonia 'with great joy'.

⁹⁴ HCL X.10, p. 41; Brundage, p. 62.

⁹⁵ HCL XXV.4, p. 184; Brundage, p. 203.

⁹⁶ HCL XXVII.1, p. 194; Brundage, p. 214.

⁹⁷ HCL XXVIII.6, p. 205; Brundage, p. 226.

Great joy, or simply rejoicing, is the key concept in the whole structure; it is the third, optional link of the structure (especially *cum gaudio*, *cum gaudio magno* and *gaudens*, *gaudentes*), yet also the crucial element in understanding Henry's ideology. Because it is Christendom which returns home with joy, the pagans and the local false Christians do not generally have this happiness granted to them. As a matter of fact, only a few dubious exceptions break this rule. Earlier I pointed to the doubts Henry seems to show in his attitude towards Vsevolod, the prince of Gerzike. Also now, after making a fidelity treaty with the Germans, this 'enemy of the Christian name' joyfully returns home (*reversus est letus in terram suam*, 'returned joyfully to his own land')⁹⁸ – yet later again starts to agitate the pagans against the Germans. By the same token, just like Prince Vetseke of Kokenhusen (Latv. Koknese) before him,⁹⁹ so the prince of Polotsk (Belorussian Polatsk) joyfully returns to his city (*reversus est in Ploceke civitatem suam cum gaudio*, 'joyfully returned to Polotsk, his city') after he has made a peace treaty with the bishop of Riga (thus again only after a reconciliation with the Germans).¹⁰⁰ However, the king's joy undoubtedly consists for the greater part of Henry's own joy, because – and here we note a significant gradation by Henry – 'the bishop and all his people went downstream with even greater joy (*cum omnibus suis maiori gaudio descendens*) and returned to Livonia',¹⁰¹ In the chronicle, even the Estonians are given the chance to rejoice a little over returning home, yet only after having joined the Sword Brethren's looting and killing campaign in Russia (*reversi sunt in Odempe gaudentes*, 'they returned rejoicing to Odenpäh' [Est. Otepää]),¹⁰² or immediately after accepting the sacrament of baptism.¹⁰³ But all these are already the rejoicings of 'Christendom', which further prove the rule.

But the 'joyful returns' belong above all to the German crusaders and to their Livish and Lettgallian comrades-in-arms. In the chronicle, a joyful return home is not only one of the constant motifs, but also a sign of a Christian. This is well illustrated by the ending of the chronicle. After all, its final prose sentence ends with an ecphonema: *redite cum gaudio Rigenses!* ('return with joy, O Rigans!').¹⁰⁴

⁹⁸ HCL XIII.4, p. 71; Brundage, p. 93.

⁹⁹ HCL IX.10, p. 41.

¹⁰⁰ HCL XVI.2, p. 104; Brundage, p. 123.

¹⁰¹ HCL XVI.2, p. 104; Brundage, p. 123.

¹⁰² HCL XX.5, p. 138; Brundage, p. 158.

¹⁰³ HCL XXI.6, p. 146; XXIII.7, p. 162. Cf. Hermann Hildebrand, *Die Chronik Heinrichs von Lettland. Ein Beitrag zu Livlands Historiographie und Geschichte* (Berlin, 1865), p. 31.

¹⁰⁴ HCL XXX.6, p. 222; Brundage, p. 246.

This is the chronicle's last, most sublime call to return home after years of missionary work.

Coming back from ideological judgements to the everyday realm, we can maintain that the primary reasons for the use of the motif are quite simple. The cyclic elementary force of life itself, the endless alternation of morning and evening, the countless departures from and returns to home – it is here that we find Henry's chronicle's principle of composition. Taking the natural succession of events as the base structure of his text, Henry cannot but repeat everything again and again. In this sense, the chronological style of the chronicle is naturalistic, free from evident ideology. But this ideological freedom also encompasses in itself effective forces.

Modern scholarship traditionally contrasts Greco-Roman and Christian-medieval conceptions of time. While Greco-Roman time pulsates in the circle of recurrences, being cyclic and as if closed into a spatial regularity, Christianity ascribes to time the meaning of creating history, treating it as linear, irreversible, ever moving towards the future, towards fulfilment.¹⁰⁵ The incarnation or God's embodiment in the living flesh of man, Christ's death on the cross and resurrection were unique historical events and exactly for that reason they represented ethical values. However, despite changes in the conceptualization of the inner relations of space-time, the cyclic scheme of time also kept a firm place in a medieval person's worldview.

The reasons for this derived from the simple facts of everyday life, the yearly recurrence of agricultural labour, the calendar and liturgically rhythmical nature of ecclesiastical life, the persistence of folk beliefs and other things.¹⁰⁶ Co-existent with Christian elite ideology, the economical and natural cyclic model inevitable in the practices of life never disappeared. Still more, the construction of the sacred itself seems hardly to be thinkable without the moment of repetition.

The typological way of thinking, which was the basis for the exegesis of the Holy Scripture, concealed in itself recurrence that disturbed the purity of timely irreversibility: 'Typology is a "machine" ... to neutralize time.'¹⁰⁷ The typological connexion of two events separated in time creates an alternative to the strict unidirectionality of time – even when the connection is not based on duplication but on fulfilment (following St Augustine: the Old Testament as the hidden New Testament and the New Testament as the fulfilment of the

¹⁰⁵ Germano Pàttaro, 'La conception chrétienne du temps', in *Les cultures et les temps: Études préparées pour l'UNESCO* (Paris, 1975), pp. 193–222.

¹⁰⁶ Barg, *Эпохи и идеи*, pp. 129–31.

¹⁰⁷ Sergei S. Averintsev, 'Порядок космоса и порядок истории в мировоззрении раннего средневековья', in *Античность и Византия* (Moscow, 1975), pp. 266–85 (here 273–4).

Old Testament). As Mircea Eliade pointed out, neither sacred time nor sacred history can be purely linear, as in this way they would not be differentiated from profane time and history.¹⁰⁸ Abstract Christian time has a certain firm direction, and it is striving forcefully for its end, but there must be regular breaks in it, the omens which remind us of the sacredness of this continuous flow of time. These breaks, the omens, can be based only on some kind of repetition. Typology is an instrument for establishing the progressive repetitiousness in time flowing towards its sacred end. The Christian theology of time is a peculiar amalgam of mythical and historical perceptions of the world, of cyclic and linear concepts of time.

Considering the constraints of Henry's subject matter and genre, one still cannot exclude the fact that he had additional reasons for reminding his audience of the myth of returning home. To some extent, we are probably dealing here with a sign of the traditional way of thinking, which the Christian Middle Ages managed to amalgamate into itself with an often surprising will for synthesis. The myth of eternal return, of the ever-recurring spring, the eternal birth and death and of endless happy ends, the warrant for which seemed to hide itself in the yearly circle of nature, offered daily protection for a medieval person who was already oppressed by the singularity of history. After all, the mythical eternal return has always been a refugee from 'the terror of history', 'the terror of time'.¹⁰⁹ And this obvious relaxation, anticipating Henry's words at the end of his text, *reversi sunt in terram suam*, is also a break, a relief in his missionary work. The opportunity to return home again and again, away from Christian history, to step aside from the ideological line and to enter into the rhythms of nature – this could have been one of Henry's secret wishes. In the structures of a priest's consciousness, intertwined with Christian narrative, its elder brother, pagan myth, is perhaps also still alive.

¹⁰⁸ Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York, 1961), pp. 104–13.

¹⁰⁹ Mircea Eliade, *Cosmos and History*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York, 1985), pp. 139–62; Mircea Eliade, *Images and Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism*, trans. Philip Mairet (London, 1961), pp. 71–3.

Chapter 3

Henricus the Ethnographer: Reflections on Ethnicity in the Chronicle of Livonia

Jüri Kivimäe

Introduction

The title of this chapter is invented and misleading. The German missionary and parish priest *Henricus de Lettis*, the author of *Chronicon Livoniae*, never called himself an ethnographer.¹ As was typical of many other thirteenth-century authors, he referred to himself in the chronicle only a few times and always indirectly in the third person. This epithet – the ethnographer – was never used by his early thirteenth-century contemporaries, by his fellow missionaries, or by other actors on the stage of God's Vineyard called Livonia.

The pertinence of the term 'ethnography' to the study at hand lies in the force of its etymology, as *éthnos*, people, and *graphein*, writing about them. The subversive construction of the argument envisaged here will serve as a reminder that the term 'ethnography' was not coined until the late eighteenth century in Germany and then, as *Ethnographia*, used as an equivalent of 'knowledge of peoples'.² It is therefore perilously anachronistic to project it back five centuries.

What have these word roots to do with Henry's chronicle of Livonia? To put it otherwise, what was Henry doing in his chronicle if not 'inscribing the knowledge of peoples'? Indeed, Henry's chronicle offers posterity quite a detailed and informative picture of the Baltic and Finno-Ugric peoples or tribes and their ethnic relations during the era of crusades and Christianization, but in terms of his own rhetoric and times. This knowledge, drawn from Henry's eloquent narration, has later become anchored in the general history of the Baltic region as well as in national histories.

¹ Many of the ideas elaborated here originated in discussions with my students in the Henry of Livonia seminar at the University of Toronto since 2007. I owe them a debt of gratitude. I am also grateful for the comments and advice of Kristiina Ross and Alexander C. Murray who, of course, are innocent of my remaining errors of fact and reasoning.

² Justin Stagl, *A History of Curiosity: The Theory of Travel 1550–1800* (Chur, 1995), pp. 234–45.

Historiography has seldom questioned the reliability of data on ethnicity in Henry's narrative. Henry's famous statement – 'Nothing has been put in this account except what we have seen almost entirely with our eyes. What we have not seen with our own eyes, we have learned from those who saw it and who were there'³ – met moderately critical interpretation from Leonid Arbusow,⁴ whereas Paul Johansen acknowledged it as Henry's adequate testimony of lived experience.⁵ Indeed, closer analysis of Henry's account has discovered only a few errors, most of them occurring in the first parts of the chronicle, during the narration of events that took place before Henry's arrival in the new colony.⁶ One can treat the question of reliability from another angle and ask how Henry was able to comprehend his situatedness in Livonia and Estonia, which entailed being an eyewitness of the events he described in the chronicle. But before entering the world of ethnic relations constructed by Henry, we should briefly characterize the chronicler himself, his origin and the intellectual skills that equipped him to narrate the stories of crusade and mission.

Henry of the Letts versus Henry the Latvian

Henry's ethnic origin and his early life play an essential role in our investigation. The circumstances of Henry's origin – whether he was German or a native of the eastern Baltic – have a crucial impact on the deconstruction of his narrative. Most of the data illuminating Henry's life story is derived from the text of the chronicle, regardless of the fact that the biographical information about the author in the chronicle is extremely scanty and that it has given rise to contradictory explanations.⁷ As early as the nineteenth century, close reading of Henry's chronicle led to various and apparently controversial interpretations

³ HCL XXIX.9, p. 215; Brundage, pp. 237–8.

⁴ Leonid Arbusow, 'Das entlehnte Sprachgut in Heinrichs "Chronicon Livoniae". Ein Beitrag zur Sprache mittelalterlicher Chronistik', *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 8 (1951), 100–153 (here 137). Arbusow suggests that Henry's words are only 'ein rhetorischer Gemeinplatz', just a phrase borrowed from St Jerome and from the New Testament (1 John 1:1, Luke 1:2).

⁵ Paul Johansen, 'Die Chronik als Biographie. Heinrich von Lettlands Lebensgang und Weltanschauung', *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, n.s. 1 (1953), 1–24 (here 4–5).

⁶ See the recent analysis of this part of HCL by Anti Selart, 'Iam tunc ... The Political Context of the First Part of the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia', in *The Medieval Chronicle*, vol. 5, ed. Erik Kooper (Amsterdam and New York, 2008), pp. 197–209.

⁷ Cf. Enn Tarvel, 'Sissejuhatus', in *Henriku Liivimaa kroonika*, trans. Richard Kleis, ed. Enn Tarvel (Tallinn, 1982), p. 5. Paul Johansen emphasized that the text of the chronicle

of its author's personality. The idea of Henry's Latvian extraction is based on a biased translation of the name *Henricus de Lettis* as Henry of the Letts. This was mistakenly construed in the first publication of the chronicle by Johann Daniel Gruber in 1740, and modern scholarship has since rejected the idea.⁸ Despite well-founded rejection of it, however, the erroneous notion of Henry's Latvian origin still appears in Baltic national history textbooks.⁹ Early research on the chronicle revealed that Henry referred to himself six times in the text, as a rule indirectly and in the third person. As was customary in the thirteenth century, Henry uses primarily his given name in Latin form and never mentions his real surname.

1207 – *Henricus, scholaris Alebrandi* (XI.7)

1208 – *Heinricus sacerdos et Lethti* (XII.6)

1212 – *Henricus de Lettis, sacerdos et interpres* (XVI.3)

1213 – *Henricus et Alabrandus* (XVII.6)

1220 – *Henricus, Lettorum minister de Ymera* (XXIV.1)

1220 – *Henricus et Petrus* (XXIV.2)

His self-designation in 1212 as 'priest and interpreter, Henry of the Letts'¹⁰ cannot serve as evidence that Henry descended from the Lettgallians or actually from the Latvians. One can clearly argue with his hypothetical Latvian extraction in the case of another self-designation in 1220 as *Henricus, Lettorum minister de Ymera* (Henry, the minister of the Letts of Ümera [Latv. Jumara]). The comparison of these two passages provides convincing proof that, besides participating in missionary activities and military raids, Henry served as a

enables us to discern the author's biography and relevant biographical information (Johansen, 'Die Chronik als Biographie,' p. 1).

⁸ Tarvel, 'Sissejuhatus,' p. 13.

⁹ Robert Holtzmann, 'Studien zu Heinrich von Lettland,' *Neues Archiv der Gesellschaft für ältere deutsche Geschichtskunde* 43/1 (1920), 159–212; Friedrich von Keussler, 'Die Nationalität des Chronisten Heinrich von Lettland [Heinrich von Lon] und sein Lebensgang,' *Sitzungsberichte der Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Altertumskunde zu Riga aus dem Jahre 1914* (1921), 150–67; Leonid Arbusow, 'Die Forschungen über das "Chronicon Livoniae" im letzten Jahrzehnt (1920–1930),' *Latvijas Universitātes Raksti/Acta Universitatis Latviensis, Filologijas un filosofijas Fakultātes serija* I.6 (1931), 373–90; Arveds Švabe, 'Kas bija Latviešu Indriķis,' *Senatne un Māksla* 4 (1938), 11–38; summarizing the debate, see Hans Nordmann [pseud. Leonid Arbusow], 'Die "Umvolkung" des deutschen Chronisten Heinrich von Livland,' *Jomsburg* 3 (1939), 223–7. See also Alfred Bilmanis, *History of Latvia* (Princeton, 1951), p. 55; Arnold Spekke, *History of Latvia: An Outline* (Stockholm, 1951), p. 129 (this notion was reprinted in the recent edn, Riga, 2006, p. 123).

¹⁰ HCL XVI.3, p. 107; Brundage, p. 126.

parish priest of the Latvians at Ümera, or more precisely in the place later called Papendorf (Latv. Rubene). The translation of *de Lettis* as 'of the Letts/Lettgallians' gets some support from the chronicle, if we draw some parallels with the identification of Henry's fellow Germans in Livonia like *Theodoricus de Kukenoys* (Theodoric of Kokenhusen) or *Rodolfus de Wenden* (Rudolph of Wenden).¹¹ In both cases the affixed *de* indicates not the toponym of initial origin, but the place in Livonia where the Germans were based. A similar kind of identification system can be seen in names like *Danielus miles de Lenewarda* (Daniel the knight of Lennewarden) and *Bertoldus, frater milicie de Wenden* (Bertold, a Brother of the Militia from Wenden), who was the fourth Master of the Sword Brethren (1208–17).¹² Consequently, following Enn Tarvel, one has to conclude that *Henricus de Lettis* was no more a Latvian than *Theodoricus de Thoreyda* was a Livish man from Treiden (Latv. Turaida).¹³

However, these considerations do not unequivocally prove Henry's German origin. As a rule the chronicler always differentiates the Germans from the indigenous Baltic people, but he never uses a reflexive noun like *Theuthonicus* or *Saxo/Saxonus* in his own name. The whole text of the chronicle is composed so skilfully as to render the narrator and his identity virtually invisible. There is only one passage where Henry 'forgot' his authorial position. Narrating the battle against the Öselians at the village of Carethen (Est. Kareda) in winter 1220, he rejoiced over the victory and added that there were about 500 (!) dead Öselians and that only 'two of our men fell and two of the Letts'.¹⁴ Making the distinction between 'ours' and the 'Latvians' is strong evidence that Henry identified himself as a German rather than of Latvian origin.

Thus the long debate on the ethnic origin of the chronicler reflects not the realities and oppositions of the thirteenth century, but primarily the ideological imperatives of Baltic national history-writing in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

¹¹ HCL XXII.3, p. 150; XXIV.2, p. 171.

¹² HCL XI.8, p. 56; Brundage, p. 76; HCL XII.6, p. 61; Brundage, p. 83. On Master Bertold, see Friedrich Benninghoven, *Der Orden der Schwertbrüder. Fratres milicie Christi de Livonia* (Cologne, 1965), pp. 422–3.

¹³ Tarvel, 'Sissejuhatus', p. 5; cf. HCL I.12, p. 6; IV.6, p. 14. The author of this chapter prefers the ethnic name 'Livish, Livs' to that of 'Livonian, Livonians', as the latter denotes primarily all the peoples of Livonia.

¹⁴ HCL XXIII.9, pp. 166–7; Brundage, p. 185. See also HCL XXV.2, p. 181.

Henry the Missionary and Interpreter

Modern research has praised Henry's considerable language skills. One can hardly imagine a missionary and a parish priest in Livonia without appropriate knowledge of at least one native language spoken in the thirteenth-century eastern Baltic. Both of these roles entail and encompass translation, both linguistic and cultural. Henry's written Latin, with its vocabulary, phraseology, borrowings and quotations, has been the subject of extensive research by Leonid Arbusow and Wilis Bilkins.¹⁵ Less is known about his purported mother tongue, the German language. One can presume that a German dialect, perhaps Middle Low German, was Henry's colloquial language for communicating with his fellow German clergymen and colonists at Riga or when accompanying the crusaders. Surprisingly, in Henry's Latin text there are only a few specific German words like *watmal* (coarse woollen cloth) and *waypas* (woollen rugs or tapestry), notwithstanding German place names like Aldenborch, Lowenborch, Meyendorpe and so on.¹⁶

But Henry's designation as the interpreter (*interpre*)¹⁷ was not based on his proficiency in German and Latin. Henry's travels to baptize the natives in Livonia and Estonia, and as interpreter in the company of Bishop Philip of Ratzeburg (r. 1204–15), or papal legate William of Modena (c. 1184–1251), indicate his knowledge of vernacular Livonian, Latvian and Estonian. This notion is supported by several native words and phrases in the chronicle's text, like Estonian-Livish *malewa* ('army'), *maja* ('house'(?)) or *Maga magamas*,¹⁸ or Latvian *draugs* ('friend'), or even *Laula! Laula! Pappi* ('sing, sing, priest').¹⁹

¹⁵ Arbusow, 'Das entlehnte Sprachgut'; Wilis Bilkins, *Die Spuren von Vulgata, Brevier und Missale in der Sprache von Heinrichs Chronicon Livoniae* (Riga, 1928).

¹⁶ *Watmal* – HCL I.11, p. 6; *waypas* – HCL XXVII.6, p. 199; Holtzmann, 'Studien zu Heinrich von Lettland', pp. 178–80; Leonid Arbusow, 'Die mittelalterliche Schriftüberlieferung als Quelle für die Frühgeschichte der ostbaltischen Völker', in *Baltische Lande*, vol. 1: 'Ostbaltische Frühzeit', ed. Albert Brackmann and Carl Engel (Leipzig, 1939), pp. 167–203 (here 178).

¹⁷ HCL XVI.3, p. 107.

¹⁸ *Malewa* – HCL IX.3, p. 27; XIX.9, p. 134; XX.2, p. 136; XXIII.7, p. 161; *maia*, *maya* – HCL XV.7, p. 94; XXIII.7, p. 160; XXIII.9, p. 167; *Maga magamas*, that is, 'You will stay here for eternity' – HCL XV.3, p. 89; Brundage, p. 110. See also the detailed study by Paul Alvre, 'Eesti ja liivi keeleaines Henriku Liivimaa kroonikas', *Keel ja Kirjandus* 6 (1984), 335–42; 9 (1984), 538–43; 1 (1985), 32–6, 2 (1985), 96–105.

¹⁹ Latvian *draugs* – HCL XVI.4, p. 108, in which respect it is interesting that Henry translates the word into Latin – *draugum sum, id est consocium*, 'draugs, that is, his fellow'; *Laula! Laula! Pappi* – HCL XVIII.8, p. 121; Brundage, p. 141.

Henry also provides an accurate translation for the place he calls *Odenpe* (Ger. Odenpäh, Est. Otepää) as *Caput Ursi* ('Bear's Head').²⁰

These pieces of evidence, however, do not give us sufficient explanation of Henry's level of Estonian, Livish and Latvian proficiency. The circumstances of when and how he learned those languages remain unknown. Paul Johansen supposed that Henry obtained his primary knowledge of the Livish and even Latvian languages at Segeberg monastery, where he lived and learned together with 30 young Livish hostages taken by Bishop Albert from Livonia in 1200.²¹ One can presume that there were other factors as well that complicated Henry's ability to communicate with the natives and even to interpret vernacular Livish, Latvian and Estonian. For example, we have to acknowledge the reality that at the time these languages existed in a variety of dialects. Linguists have concluded that at some time before the thirteenth century the distinctive features separating the northern and southern Estonian dialects became further accentuated and new divergencies developed.²² These qualifying circumstances neither question Henry's competence in native languages and dialects, nor diminish his role as an exceptional cleric among the overwhelming majority of colonists and crusaders, all of whom were faced with the language barrier and culture clash in the Baltic. Clearly, there is a need to reopen the discussion of the Livonian mission and early colonization which focuses on language communication and its constraints.²³

Henry's 'Learned' Terminology: *gens*, *natio* and *populus*

Henry's Livonian chronicle is a treasury of names and designations for indigenous peoples, tribes and ethnic groups. Finding clear bearings in Henry's complicated system of ethnic designations requires scrupulous, specialized research.²⁴ Therefore, in this study I can only outline some of the aspects of such

²⁰ HCL XII.6, p. 63.

²¹ Johansen, 'Die Chronik als Biographie', p. 10. This is a probable hypothesis without further proof.

²² Alo Raun and Andrus Saareste, *Introduction to Estonian Linguistics* (Wiesbaden, 1965), p. 57.

²³ See the detailed analysis by Alan V. Murray in Chapter 4 of this volume.

²⁴ See Laurence Moal, 'Les peuples étrangers dans les chroniques bretonnes à la fin du Moyen Âge', *Revue historique* 311/3 (2009), 499–528; Thierry Canava, 'Les peuples fenniques dans la Chronique de Henri de Letton', *Etudes finno-ougriennes* 26 (1994), 99–119; see also Clara Redlich, *Nationale Frage und Ostkolonisation im Mittelalter* (Berlin, 1934); Fritz Rörig, "'Nationale Frage" und Ostkolonisation', *Historische Zeitschrift* 154/1 (1936), 96–103.

a demanding investigation. In what follows, use of the metaphor 'ethnographer' to refer to Henry's activities may prove impractical, as I have already preliminarily suggested above. To date, researchers have not presupposed that Henry composed his chronicle on the basis of previously recorded writings, or using field notes in the manner of a modern ethnographer. There is no evidence whatsoever for such an assumption. Moreover, Leonid Arbusow, Paul Johansen, Enn Tarvel and other scholars share the view that Henry composed his chronicle in the period between August 1224 and February or March 1227.²⁵ Such a claim testifies to Henry's extraordinary capacity for recollection, which Johansen has emphasized as the chronicler's primary mode of composition.²⁶ Of course one cannot completely rule out the possibility that Henry may have used some kind of written notes, particularly in the case of unfamiliar or difficult-to-recall place names or proper names. He might have made such notes during baptismal or military expeditions, either spurred by natural curiosity or for practical purposes of translation.²⁷

The fact that the chronicle was written retrospectively also means that the text reflects Henry's cumulative knowledge and experiences, gathered over the course of slightly more than two decades of missionary activities. This fact is important, considering the way he mentions and describes the various tribes and peoples of the Baltic area. Before turning to a detailed examination of these, we should clarify what kind of general terminology Henry used for these tribes and peoples. We have no reason to believe that Henry's 'learned' terminology originated from scholarly works in circulation at the time in Western Europe as well as in Germany. Henry's knowledge could only have been derived from the religious texts by means of which he was educated, and from which he borrowed the respective Latin conceptual vocabulary.

The terminology used for ethnicity was no simpler in the Middle Ages than it is in today's usage. The central concepts in medieval Latin usage were certainly *gens* and *natio*, but, as Robert Bartlett argues, the actual semantic field of these terms can only be mapped by detailed investigation of individual usage or text.²⁸

²⁵ Tarvel, 'Sissejuhatust', p. 6; see the slightly different dating in Arbusow, 'Das entlehnte Sprachgut', p. 100; Johansen, 'Die Chronik als Biographie', p. 3; see also Hermann Hildebrand, *Die Chronik Heinrichs von Lettland. Ein Beitrag zu Livlands Historiographie und Geschichte* (Berlin and Dorpat, 1865), p. 20; Heinrich Laakmann, 'Zur Geschichte Heinrichs von Lettland und seiner Zeit', *Beiträge zur Kunde Estlands* 18/2 (1933), 57–102 (here 74).

²⁶ Johansen, 'Die Chronik als Biographie', p. 5.

²⁷ Leonid Arbusow, 'Die mittelalterliche Schriftüberlieferung', p. 179; Hildebrand, *Die Chronik Heinrichs von Lettland*, p. 18.

²⁸ Robert Bartlett, 'Medieval and Modern Concepts of Race and Ethnicity', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 31/1 (2001), 39–56 (here 42).

There is no doubt that *gens* referred first and foremost to a tribe.²⁹ However, it has been emphasized that medieval *gentes* were of heterogeneous composition and primarily political units. Susan Reynolds points out that the variability of customs and languages between political units was often no greater than their internal heterogeneity.³⁰ Language is therefore not of primary importance in the identification of a medieval tribe. In the case of early medieval Germanic peoples, Hans-Werner Goetz undertook to study the perception of the concept of *gentes* in contemporary sources from late antiquity and the early Middle Ages, leaving aside the question of who the Germanic peoples were and how they became what they were in early medieval times.³¹

Henry's Livonian chronicle is not exceptional in its use of the medieval term *gens/gentes*. Unfortunately, the various translations of the chronicle are far from agreeing how this term should be translated. Enn Tarvel points out that *gens/gentes* can be rendered in several ways, including 'tribes, peoples, pagans'.³² Though it may be difficult to distinguish between tribes and peoples, *gentes* is often translated as 'pagans' without sufficient thought. In his famous Rigan etymology – more properly speaking, his word-play – Henry attempted to explain how Riga waters the *gentes in circuitu* (in the surrounding area) through the holy font of baptism.³³ Different translations use all three variants as terms corresponding to *gentes* – tribes, peoples and pagans. In another passage, Henry's *gens enim Lyvonum*³⁴ designates only 'the Livish tribe or people', although *gens Lyvoniensis*,³⁵ mentioned in 1217 in hexameter verse, addresses 'the people of Livonia', and not the Livish people or the Livs in the narrow meaning. The third

²⁹ See Alexander C. Murray, *Germanic Kinship Structure: Studies in Law and Society in Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Toronto, 1983), p. 44; for recent discussion of the term *gentes*, see also Alexander C. Murray, 'Reinhard Wenskus on "Ethnogenesis", Ethnicity, and the Origin of the Franks', in *On Barbarian Identity: Critical Approaches to Ethnicity in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Andrew Gillett (Turnhout, 2002), pp. 39–68.

³⁰ Susan Reynolds, 'Government and Community', in *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. IV, part 1, ed. David Luscombe and Jonathan Riley-Smith (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 86–112 (here 89).

³¹ Hans-Werner Goetz, 'Gens: Terminology and Perception of the "Germanic" Peoples from Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages', in *The Construction of Communities in the Early Middle Ages: Texts, Resources and Artefacts*, ed. Richard Corradini, Max Diesenberger and Helmut Reimitz (Leiden, 2003), pp. 39–61 (here 41).

³² Kleis and Tarvel, *Henriku Liivimaa kroonika*, p. 35, n. 12.

³³ HCL IV.5, p. 14; Brundage, p. 37.

³⁴ HCL X.15, p. 46; Brundage, p. 67.

³⁵ HCL XXI.1, p. 140; Brundage, p. 160.

meaning of *gentes* as 'heathen tribes' is uncertain; besides, in some passages Henry uses *gentes* as a synonym for *pagani*.³⁶

The usage of *natio* in Henry's text seems to be inconsistent.³⁷ In 1210, the chronicler concludes that: 'The Livonian church was thus now beset with many tribulations, inasmuch as it was in the midst of "many nations" (*plurimarum nationum*) and the adjacent Russians, who all took counsel together over ways to destroy it.'³⁸ Narrating the story of the great raid of the Öselians, the Rotalians and the Revalians on Treiden in 1211, Henry mentions how the bishops called on their knights and commanded the crusaders to take revenge upon *Estonum nationibus* – 'the Estonian tribes'.³⁹

Henry's usage of *populus* demonstrates a similar kind of lexical variation. In several passages he uses this term in its general sense: for example, in *pars populi baptizatur* ('part of the people' were baptized)⁴⁰ or simply *populi nostri* ('our people').⁴¹ Parallel to these examples we will find cases where the chronicler designates the ethnic units with the term *populi*, as when he records the promises made to Meinhard by some Germans, Danes, Norwegians and 'some other peoples' (*de singulis populis*) to bring their armies to Livonia.⁴² Another passage from 1205 recounts how the Christians, in alliance with Semgallians, gained a victory over 'both peoples' (*utroque populo*), the Estonians and the Lithuanians; however, the following sentence in the same paragraph mentions how the Germans and the Semgallians turned to 'the spoils of both tribes' (*spolia gentis utriusque*), the Estonians and the Lithuanians.⁴³ These and many other evidences will only support the notion that Henry's 'ethnic terminology' is inconsistent and over-determined.

As a rule, the chronicler designates all indigenous peoples by their own names and thereby constructs a sophisticated system of ethnonyms. Henry's genuine curiosity, his missionary activities and personal experience resulted

³⁶ Cf. HCL X.13, p. 43 (*ad subiugandas gentes fidei Christiani*); HCL VIII.1, p. 23 (*pro gentium conversione*).

³⁷ See in general Hans-Dietrich Kahl, 'Einige Beobachtungen zum Sprachgebrauch von *natio* im mittelalterlichen Latein mit Ausblicken auf das neuhochdeutsche Fremdwort "Nation"', in *Aspekte der Nationenbildung im Mittelalter*, ed. Helmut Beumann and Werner Schröder (Sigmaringen, 1978), pp. 63–108.

³⁸ HCL XIV.7, p. 78.

³⁹ HCL XV.3, p. 90. However, Kleis and Tarvel's Estonian translation of HCL suggests 'Estonian heathen tribes' (Est. *eestlaste paganahõimudele*), *Henriku Liivimaa kroonika*, p. 121.

⁴⁰ HCL I.6, p. 3.

⁴¹ HCL IX.1, p. 26.

⁴² HCL I.11, p. 6.

⁴³ HCL IX.4, p. 28.

in an 'encyclopaedic database' of medieval Baltic and Finno-Ugric tribes and peoples and their neighbours, with indications of their settled areas. Almost every paragraph of the text contains several or even many ethnonyms.

The Livs

Henry's chronicle begins with the narrative of the conversion of the Livs to the Christian faith. Whether he had acquired the rudiments of the Livish language at the Segeberg monastery or during his first baptismal expeditions to the Livs, Henry certainly benefited from his knowledge of the language during the time he was in Riga in the retinue of Bishop Albert. When narrating the deeds of the Livs in his chronicle, Henry shows impeccable consistency. From the beginning of the chronicle, to designate the Livs he uses mostly the plural form *Lyvones*, and in certain specific cases the singular form *Lyvo*.⁴⁴

On a few occasions in the later chapters of the chronicle, Henry uses *Lyvonenses*, which sometimes, depending on the context, signifies all the Christian inhabitants of Livonia, the Livonians (including baptized Livs), not only Livs as a Finno-Ugric tribe. When Henry describes the battle with the Russians that took place at the village of *Puidyse* (Est. Puide) in August 1218, he mentions both *exercitus Lyvonensis* and the general term *Lyvonenses*, which should be understood as a common designation (including the army thereof) for Rigans, Latvians and Livs.⁴⁵ The same is true in Henry's text for *episcopi Lyvonensibus*, meaning the bishops of Livonia (more precisely, those of the Livonian land) and not the bishops of the Livs.⁴⁶ This distinction between those of the Livonian land, the Livonians ('Livlanders') and Livs is traditional in the languages of the Baltic peoples, as well as in German (for example, *Livländer – Liven*), but in order to make the same differentiation in English, one would have to use either Livs or Livish people.⁴⁷ Henry's ethnonym *Lyvones* is an umbrella term which signifies first and foremost those indigenous tribes or people who communicated among themselves using the Livish tongue.⁴⁸ According to several authors, Livish was similar to the Estonian dialects of the time. From the chronicle we get the impression that the covering term *Lyvones* was generally accepted, and that it had been in use at least since the time of Meinhard.

⁴⁴ HCL II.6, p. 10.

⁴⁵ HCL XXII.2, p. 148.

⁴⁶ HCL XXIII.10, p. 167; Brundage, p. 186.

⁴⁷ Karl Inno, 'Aestii, the Estonians, and the Origin of Eesti', in *Ural-Altai Yearbook*, ed. Gyula Décsy and A.J.E. Bodrogligeti, vol. 54 (Berlin, 1982), pp. 57–85 (here 66).

⁴⁸ See in general Christopher Moseley, *Livonian* (Munich, 2002).

However, we are not sure whether it was also the Livs' self-designation at the time. According to much later tradition, the Western Livs referred to themselves as *raandalist* ('coast people') and the Eastern Livs *kalamied* ('fishermen').⁴⁹ It is not impossible that the Latin *Lyvones* indeed came into use during the time of the conquest and Christianization.

One might claim, albeit with a certain ambivalence, that in Henry's time the Livish area of settlement corresponded to the region the chronicle refers to as *Lyvoniam*. However, one should not confuse this with the use of the word 'Livonia' in the later Middle Ages which, as we know, denoted the territory of both present-day Latvia and Estonia.⁵⁰ Among the narratives for the year 1207 the chronicler moralizes that the secular judges *per universam Lyvoniam, et Letthigallia et Estoniam* ('throughout all Livonia, Lettgallia, and Estonia') had grown greedy for money and no longer administered justice according to God's law.⁵¹ Consequently, what is being spoken of here is Livonia, bordered both by Lettgallia and Estonia. Henry also writes separately of Semgallia (Ger. Semgallien, Latv. Zemgale) and Curonia (Ger. Kurland, Latv. Kurzeme), which were the areas neighbouring Livonia. It is this Livonia that Bishop Albert offered to the king of Germany, Philip of Swabia (r. 1198–1208), in 1207, and which he received in return as a fiefdom.⁵² And it is to the parishes (*in parochiis*) of this same Livonia – *Thoreida*, *Methsepole*, *Ydumea* and *iuxta Dunam* ('to the banks of the Dūna [Latv. Daugava] River') – that Bishop Albert sent priests.⁵³ This same Livonia was the one the Sword Brethren divided into three parts in 1207, so that *Thoreida* (Ger. Treiden, Latv. Turaida) and *Methsepole* (Latv. Metsepole), which had until then belonged to Caupo, a Livish chieftain, were now given to Bishop Albert, and the third part *ex altera parte Coiwe* ('from the opposite shore of the Livonian Aa [Latv. Gauja] River') was given to the distributors.⁵⁴ Thus, drawing on the evidence from 1207, we can see reflected here the traditional administrative division of *Lyvonum terra* – 'the land of the Livs'.⁵⁵

⁴⁹ Felix J. Oinas, *The Livonians* (New Haven, 1955), p. 4.

⁵⁰ Reinhard Wittram, 'Baltische Lande – Schicksal und Name. Umriss der äußeren geschichtlichen Wandlungen seit dem 13. Jahrhundert im Spiegel des Landesnamens', in *Baltische Lande*, vol. 1, pp. 480–83 (here 480).

⁵¹ HCL X.15, p. 46; Brundage, p. 67.

⁵² HCL X.17, p. 47.

⁵³ HCL XI.2, p. 48; Brundage, p. 69; cf. Evald Tõnisson, *Die Gauja-Liven und ihre materielle Kultur (11. Jahrhundert – Anfang 13. Jahrhunderts). Ein Beitrag zur ostbaltischen Frühgeschichte* (Tallinn, 1974), pp. 29–37.

⁵⁴ HCL XI.3, p. 49; Brundage, p. 70.

⁵⁵ HCL XIV.1, p. 72.

How does Henry identify the Livs of these various regions and parishes? For this purpose he uses a range of specific designations, most of which are derived from the place names of the time. In the first instance he uses the expression *Lyvones de Thoreyda* ('Livs of Treiden'), and in what follows, throughout the chronicle, he writes either *Thoredenses* or *Lyvones Thoredenses*.⁵⁶ Naturally the term 'Treiden Livs' points to their central fort in Treiden, and to the surrounding area, that is the parish, as indicated above. Likewise, Henry also writes *Lyvones de Asscrade* ('Livs of Ascheraden [Latv. Aizkraukle]'), or even *Lyvones de castro Ascrath* ('Livs from the fort of Ascheraden'), later using the synonym *Ascradenses*.⁵⁷

The chronicle offers plentiful examples of evidence for this mode of identifying the Livs, such as *Lyvones de Lenewarde* – *Lenewardenses* (Lennwarden, Latv. Lielvārde), *Lyvones Holmenses* (also *Lyvones in Holme*) – *Holmenses* (Holme [Latv. Mārtiņsala]), and also *Ykescolenses*, meaning Livs from Üxküll (Latv. Ikšķile), as well as *Lyvones de Sattesele* and *Lyvones vero Satteselesenses*, named after the Livish fort of Sattesele (Latv. Lībukalns).⁵⁸ In naming some Livish regions, Henry refers to their location either in relation to the Livonian Aa River, as in 1206 when he mentions *Lyvones, qui erant ex alia parte Coiwe in castro Dabrelis* ('the Livonians who were on the other side of the Livonian Aa River'); or when he mentions the Adje (Latv. Aģe) River – *Lyvones quidam de Adia*, or the Düna River, as in 1205–06, *Lyvones omnes circa Dunam habitantes*, which quite conceivably corresponds to another designation, *Dunenses* (the Düna Livs).⁵⁹

When, in the course of describing the events of this same year 1206, Henry mentions *Veinalenses*, it is possible that these are the same so-called Düna Livs, though in this construction Henry specifically preferred the Livish language designation for the River Düna: *Vēna* – *Veina* – *Väina*.⁶⁰ The exception to this, the *Lyvones Rigenses* mentioned in 1206, apparently signifies the Livish inhabitants of the village close (on the banks of the Düna?) to the city of Riga.⁶¹

Of the above-mentioned parishes, I have not yet discussed *Methsepole* and *Ydumea*. Although *Methsepole* is repeatedly mentioned in the chronicle, and

⁵⁶ HCL I.10, p. 4; X.6, p. 36; X.8, p. 38; X.10, p. 40; X.12, p. 42; X.13, p. 44; X.15, p. 46; XIII.5, p. 72; XIV.5, p. 77; XVI.3, p. 105.

⁵⁷ HCL VIII.1, p. 23; IX.9, p. 30; X.14, p. 45.

⁵⁸ *Lyvones de Lenewarde*: HCL VIII.1, p. 23; X.13, 14, p. 44; *Lyvones Holmenses*: I.7, p. 3; X.7, p. 37; XIV.5, p. 77; XVI.3, p. 105; XXIII.4, p. 158; XXV.2, p. 180; *Ykescolenses*: I.5, p. 3; II.7, p. 10; X.5, p. 35; *Lyvones de Sattesele*: XVI.3, p. 105.

⁵⁹ HCL X.10, p. 40; XIV.5, p. 75; IX.13, p. 32; X.13, p. 44.

⁶⁰ HCL X.6, p. 36; Lauri Kettunen, *Livisches Wörterbuch mit grammatischer Einleitung* (Helsinki, 1938), p. 480.

⁶¹ HCL X.8, p. 38; see Tarvel's comment in *Henriku Liivimaa kroonika*, p. 30, n. 4.

Henry refers to it both as *provincia* and *parochia*, the above-mentioned mode of identification is lacking for the Livish settlement region in this northernmost part of the province.⁶²

Among the designations for Livonian settlement areas, *Ydumea* has caused the most bafflement among scholars, since it is a biblical loan word. Whether Henry's transcription could be based on the phonetic similarity between this toponym – *Idumaa*? – and the biblical Idumea (Edom), on the shores of the Dead Sea, unfortunately cannot be ascertained. In the chronicle there are repeated references to the *Ydumei* (Idumeans), who are settled next to the Lettgallians (*Letti*), and where in 1213 one could find *Woldemarus, advocatus Ydeorum et Lettorum* ('Vladimir, the magistrate of the Idumeans and the Letts').⁶³ It is unfortunate that the chronicle text never clarifies who the Idumeans actually were. When describing the Russian military campaign to Livonia in 1218, the chronicler mentions twice, and unexpectedly, that they burned all the churches, both those of the Livs and those of the Idumeans (*ecclesias omnes ... tam Lyvonum quam Ydumeorum*) and that the Russian forces pillaged and laid waste the land of the Letts, Idumeans and Livs (*terram Lettorum, et Ydumeorum et Lyvonum ... vastavit*).⁶⁴ On the basis of this precarious evidence, Heinrich Laakmann speculated that in the province of *Ydumea* there may already have been mixed settlements of Livs and Lettgallians in Henry's time.⁶⁵ Although the evidence from Henry's chronicle does not add up to a whole picture of the Livs and their tribes, what he does furnish are extraordinary reports, to which it is often impossible to find any additions from later medieval sources.

The Latvians

As in the case of the Livs, the most important source for the early ethnic history of the Baltic tribes is Henry's chronicle. In the immediate vicinity of Livonia and the Livs, to the southeast and south of them lived Baltic tribes – as Henry's chronicle reports. August Bielenstein's classical scheme for the borders of the Baltic peoples in the thirteenth century is simple and straightforward – to the north of the Düna River were Livish and Lettgallian settlements, to the south

⁶² See Urmas Sutrop, Karl Pajusalu, 'Medieval Livonian county Metsepole and the historical and linguistic border between Livonians and Estonians', *Linguistica Uralica* 45 (2009), 253–68.

⁶³ HCL XVII.4, p. 113; Brundage, p. 133.

⁶⁴ HCL XXII.4, p. 151; Brundage, pp. 169–70.

⁶⁵ Heinrich Laakmann, 'Estland und Livland in frühgeschichtlicher Zeit', in *Baltische Lande*, vol. 1, pp. 204–62 (here 207).

of the Dūna, Semgallians, Selonians and Curonians.⁶⁶ Use of the covering term 'Latvians' in this context is tentative, since the assimilation of the aforementioned tribes into one Latvian people was a long process that took place over the course of centuries.⁶⁷

Compared to the other Baltic tribes, Henry's knowledge of the Lettgallians is the most accurate. After all, he was their parish priest in Papendorf, on the banks of the Ümera. When he writes of the Russian conspiracy with the Livs and Lettgallians against the Rigans in 1206, he specifies that the *Lethi* are *qui proprie dicuntur Lethigalli* ('who are properly called Lettgallians'), and reinforces this in the same passage – *Lethi vel Lethigalli* ('the Letts or the Lettgallians').⁶⁸ It is possible that in Henry's time, the Baltic tribe which later gave a common name to the Latvian people was referred to in common parlance by a single designation that had short and long forms – the Letts and the Lettgallians.

It remains unclear whether this was this people's self-designation, or whether it was simply in use among the Livs, as Manfred Hellmann rightly points out.⁶⁹ However, if we add that at the same time Henry was writing about three large regions or lands – *Lyvonia, Letthigallia et Estonia* – then what he had in mind was the area of settlement of the Lettgallians.⁷⁰ However, both Bielenstein and Hellmann have called attention to the fact that Henry often prefers to write *Letthi* and for their area of settlement *Lettia*, and that thirteenth-century Latin sources only recognize the form *Letti*.⁷¹ It is also possible that what we are seeing here is some kind of linguistic transformation that took place in the thirteenth century, which Henry's chronicle documents. As we know, all that remains of the nominative form *Letthigallia* is Latgale, the cultural and historical designation for the region of eastern Latvia.

However, Henry also knew the Lettgallian regions he referred to by names such as *Letigalli de Tholowa*, or the Tolowa (Latv. Tālava) Lettgallians; *Leththi de Beverin* (in exceptional cases also *Bevernenses*); *Letti de Kukenoys*, or the

⁶⁶ August Bielenstein, *Die Grenzen des lettischen Volksstammes und der lettischen Sprache in der Gegenwart und im 13. Jahrhundert. Ein Beitrag zur ethnologischen Geographie und Geschichte Russlands* (St Petersburg, 1892), p. 31; see also Leonid Arbusow, *Frühgeschichte Lettlands* (Riga, 1933), pp. 9–12.

⁶⁷ Cf. Evalds Mugurevics, 'Ethnic Processes in Baltic-Inhabited Territories and the Emergence of the Latvian Nation in the 6th to the 16th Century', *Humanities and Social Sciences Latvia* 3/16 (1997), 75–92.

⁶⁸ HCL X.3, p. 34; Brundage, p. 56; see also Endre Bojtár, *Foreword to the Past: A Cultural History of the Baltic People* (Budapest, 1999), pp. 129–30.

⁶⁹ Manfred Hellmann, *Das Lettenland im Mittelalter. Studien zur ostbaltischen Frühzeit und lettischen Stammesgeschichte, insbesondere Lettgallens* (Münster and Cologne, 1954), p. 2.

⁷⁰ HCL X.15, p. 46.

⁷¹ Hellmann, *Das Lettenland im Mittelalter*, p. 2.

Kokenhusen (Latv. Koknese) Lettgallians; as well as *Letigalli circa Ymeram*, Lettgallians from the Ümera River area.⁷² Henry himself was parish priest with the latter Lettgallians, and was undoubtedly familiar with the relations between surrounding tribes. In connection with the baptism of the Ümera Lettgallians, Henry tells how the Pskov Russians had made expeditions to baptize the Tolowa Lettgallians, who had also paid tribute to them.⁷³ It is noteworthy that in isolated cases Henry also uses the tribal designation in the singular, as in *Lettus Veko*,⁷⁴ though the majority of references to the Lettgallians are in the plural, just as in the form of the chronicler's own name, which we discussed above: from the form *Henricus de Lettis*, one cannot derive the singular Latin form *Henricus Lettus*.

Besides the Lettgallians, Henry makes very precise distinctions between other Baltic tribes. After the subjugation and baptizing of the Livs, military expeditions were begun against the Selonians (*Selones*), who lived in what today is the eastern part of Latvia, on the left bank of the Düna, between Dünaburg (Latv. Daugavpils) and Ascheraden.⁷⁵ In 1208, an army collected by Bishop Albert besieged the fort of the Selonians (*castrum Selonum*), which we indeed later recognize under the name of Selburg (Latv. Sēlpils).⁷⁶ For the same year, the chronicle reports that the Selonians had inhabited the Kokenhusen fort along with Lettgallians, which fort was burned down by the Russians in 1208.⁷⁷ Henry mentions them one more time in conjunction with 1225, when William of Modena preached in Kokenhusen to the Germans, as well as the Russians, Lettgallians and Selonians, who were living there together.⁷⁸

Henry has a great deal more to say about the Baltic tribe known as the Semgallians (*Semigalli*) – who in the thirteenth century were living in the southern part of today's Latvia (in the historical region of Semgallia or Zemgale), in the basin of the River Curonian Aa (Latv. Lielupe), as well as in northern Lithuania – than he does about the Selonians.⁷⁹ In the opening paragraph of

⁷² HCL XI.7, p. 55; XII.6, p. 64; XV.7, p. 95; XXIII.5, p. 158.

⁷³ HCL XI.7, p. 55.

⁷⁴ HCL XXII.3, p. 150.

⁷⁵ Called also 'Selians' or 'Sels'; Bielenstein, *Die Grenzen des lettischen Volksstammes*, pp. 168–74; Bojtár, *Foreword to the Past*, pp. 145–7; Arbusow, *Frühgeschichte Lettlands*, p. 9.

⁷⁶ HCL XI.6, p. 53.

⁷⁷ HCL XI.9, p. 57; XII.1, p. 58.

⁷⁸ HCL XXIX.5, p. 212.

⁷⁹ See in general Bielenstein, *Die Grenzen des lettischen Volksstammes*, pp. 102–67; Albert Bauer, 'Semgallen und Upmale in frühgeschichtlicher Zeit', in *Baltische Lande*, vol. 1, pp. 307–29; Bojtár, *Foreword to the Past*, pp. 142–5; William Urban, 'The Military Occupation of Semgallia in the Thirteenth Century', in *Baltic History*, ed. Arvids Ziedonis, William L. Winter and Mardi Valgemäe (Columbus, Ohio, 1974), pp. 21–34; Romas Jarockis, 'Semigallia 1100–1400: A Review of Archaeological and Historical Sources', in

his chronicle, he labels 'the pagans in the neighbourhood' (*pagani vicini*) of the Livs, and he tells the legendary story of the Semgallians who, in Meinhard's time, wanted to drag the stone fort of Üxküll into the Düna with ship's ropes.⁸⁰

Henry seems to emphasize the importance of the Semgallians: he writes *terra Semigallorum* ('land of the Semgallians'), distinguishes Vesthard (*Viesthart*), the elder of the Terweten (Latv. Tērvete) Semgallians, who is 'the noble' (*mainor natu*) 'leader of the Semgallians' (*dux Semigallorum*), or also 'the elder of the other Semgallians of the neighbouring province, which is called Terweten' (*senior aliorum Semigallorum de vicina provincia, que Thervetene vocatur*).⁸¹

Of course, Henry may have been impressed with the stories of how the Semgallians, who had hostile relations with the Livs, had burned down the church at Holme in 1202, after which they had contracted a peace treaty with the Rigans.⁸² Thus in 1219 he could contentedly write of how the Semgallians of *Mesoyte*, or Mesoten (Latv. Mežotne), had turned to Bishop Albert with a plea for help to defend them against the Lithuanians, and this in turn led to the baptizing of the Semgallians of Mesoten.⁸³ The conversion of the Semgallians to Christianity failed, however; the already-baptized Semgallians turned their back on the new faith and united with the other Semgallians, the Lithuanians and the Curonians, being bound by their ferocity 'against the Christian name'.⁸⁴ Even William of Modena was unsuccessful in bending their will; negotiations with the Semgallian elder Vesthard in 1225 were unsuccessful, and the conquest of the Semgallians is outside the temporal boundaries of Henry's chronicle.

Henry gives us no particularly specific information concerning the fourth large Baltic tribe, the Curonians, who in the thirteenth century were living in what is today the southeast part of Latvia (Curlandia) and the northwest part of Lithuania.⁸⁵ Based on the Livonian chronicle, an image has been formed of the Curonians as a warlike people of pagan pirates. In connection with Bishop Albert's return journey from Germany in 1203, Henry describes the Estonian

Culture Clash and Compromise? The Europeanisation of the Baltic Area 1100–1400 AD (Visby, 1998), pp. 45–53.

⁸⁰ HCL I.6, p. 3; see also Johansen, 'Die Chronik als Biographic', pp. 17–18.

⁸¹ HCL XII.2, p. 59; IX.3, p. 26; XXIII.4, p. 157.

⁸² HCL VI.5, p. 18.

⁸³ HCL XXIII.3, p. 156.

⁸⁴ HCL XXIII.4, p. 158.

⁸⁵ See in general Valentin Kiparsky, *Die Kurenfrage* (Helsinki, 1939); Paul Johansen, 'Kurlands Bewohner zu Anfang der historischen Zeit', in *Baltische Lande*, vol. 1, pp. 263–306; Bojtár, *Foreword to the Past*, pp. 116–18.

and Curonian pagans as ravaging the Danish and Swedish kingdoms, and doing so that very day.⁸⁶

Yet in the winter of 1201, the Curonians made a peace treaty with Bishop Albert in Riga. This was accompanied by bloodshed, as was the custom when dealing with pagans. It was of vital importance for the Germans to restore the free land route from Riga to Germany, through Curonia and Sambia (Ger. Samland, Polish Sambia).⁸⁷ Of course, the bad reputation of the Curonians was reinforced by Henry's narrative of the sea battle between the crusaders and the Curonians in 1210, near Gotland in the strait of Sund, which ended with the death of about 30 knights and other Germans.⁸⁸ The victory of the Curonians over the Germans led to the collaboration of the Livs, Curonians, Estonians and others, with the purpose of conquering Riga. Apparently Henry himself was in Riga when the Curonians besieged the city for two weeks, failing to conquer it in the end, however.⁸⁹ Henry's uplifting story of how, after the fall of *Tharbata*, or Dorpat (Est. Tartu), the Curonians hurried alongside the other peoples to make peace with the Rigans in 1225, is nevertheless misleading, since the subjugation of Curonia did not take place until the years 1230–31 and 1243–44.⁹⁰

With a certain degree of hesitation, one might make one more addition to the catalogue of Baltic tribes mentioned in Henry's chronicle: namely the *Wendi* (Wends), who have generally been considered a small people of uncertain ethnic origins, either of Slavic, Baltic or Finno-Ugric extraction. According to Henry, at the beginning of the thirteenth century the Wends lived among the Lettgallians in the area around Wenden (Est. Võnnu, Latv. Cēsis), in what is today Latvia. This humble and poor people, as Henry terms them, had been driven out from the banks of the river Windau (Latv. Venta) in Curonia by the Curonians, and when they had settled in *Mons Antiqua*, where the city of Riga had been founded, the Curonians had again driven them away.⁹¹ According to Henry's reports, the Wends had willingly allowed themselves to be baptized in 1206. When Wenden became a fort of the Sword Brethren, the knights and the Wends had lived together there.⁹² The Wends probably assimilated with the Lettgallians, and disappeared during the Middle Ages. Thus Henry's ethnographic evidence concerning the Baltic tribes at the beginning of the

⁸⁶ HCL VII.1, p. 19.

⁸⁷ HCL V.2, p. 17; cf. HCL XXIII.11, p. 168.

⁸⁸ HCL XIV.1, p. 73.

⁸⁹ HCL XIV.5, pp. 75–7.

⁹⁰ Johansen, 'Kurlands Bewohner', pp. 265–7.

⁹¹ HCL X.14, pp. 45–6.

⁹² HCL XIV.8, p. 78; XXIX.3, p. 210.

thirteenth century is extraordinarily valuable for the documentation of the point of departure of Latvian ethnogenesis.

The Estonians

When Henry began writing his chronicle in the second half of 1224, he already possessed a rich store of experience of contacts with Estonian tribes, whose settlements lay north of the Livs and his own Ümera Lettgallians. Linguists have judged his command of the Estonian language to be good, though the origin and roots of this knowledge remain unclear. In 1208 Henry was the representative of Bishop Albert at negotiations with Lettgallians and Estonians in Ugaunia (Ger. Ugaunien, Est. Ugandi).⁹³ During the years 1216–26 in particular, he participated in many military expeditions to the land of the Estonians, being one of the principal baptizers of Estonians in several provinces, as well as belonging to the entourage of William of Modena, the papal legate, in 1225–26. The fourth book of Henry's chronicle is dedicated to Estonia (*liber quartus de Estonia*) and takes up two-thirds of the whole text. It covers the two decades in which the struggle was waged – with variable success – to subjugate the Estonians and convert them to the Christian faith.

Henry's knowledge of the demarcations of the ethnic space of the eastern Baltic is quite solid. He makes a clear distinction between Estonia and Livonia, with frequent references to provinces throughout Estonia, often employing a favourite phrase, *per universam Estoniam* ('throughout all Estonia'). Once, instead of Estonia, the word *Estlandia* slips into his narrative, which is a Scandinavian, or rather Germanic form, and probably gives away the chronicler's mother tongue.⁹⁴ Henry teaches his reader that Vironia (Ger. Wierland, Est. Virumaa) is a province of Estonia, and that *provincia Harionenses* (Harria, Ger. Harrien, Est. Harjumaa) is located *in media Estonia*.⁹⁵ Commentators on Henry's chronicle have reproached him for not making clear distinctions between the notions of *provincia* and *terra*. As we can see, there are thus inconsistencies in the Estonian part of the chronicle as well, though Henry mostly uses *provincia* to designate larger territories, especially in the case of those provinces familiar to the reader of the chronicle – *Harria* (Harria), *Gerwa* (Ger. Jerwen, Est. Järvamaa), *Maritima* (Ger. Wick, Est. Läänemaa), *Saccala* (Est. Sakala), *Vironia*, *Revele* (Revalia, Est.

⁹³ HCL XII.6, p. 61.

⁹⁴ HCL VIII.3, p. 24.

⁹⁵ HCL I.13, p. 7; XX.2, p. 135.

Revala) and so on.⁹⁶ And yet Henry does not call *Ugaunia* a province, while *Gerwa* is sometimes referred to as a province, but elsewhere as *terra Gerwanensis* ('the land of the Jerwanians').⁹⁷ The latter example therefore does not support the view that in Henry's imagination *terra* necessarily stood for a larger territory, such as *terra Lyvonum* ('the land of the Livs'). Henry does not use the expression *terra Estonum*; the underlying notion can only be traced in the narrative of the first battle on the banks of the Ümera in 1210, where he writes that the Estonians thereafter 'turned back to their own country' – *reversi in terram suam* – and this is a biblical citation.⁹⁸ The second example is from 1212 when, after an unsuccessful military expedition to the mouth of the *Coywemunde* or Livonian Aa River, the Estonians 'fled back to their own land' (*fugientes in terram suam*).⁹⁹ But in both of these cases, *terra* is used in the general connotation of 'land', albeit as a synonym for the Estonians' land. Therefore Henry's chronicle leaves no doubt that Estonia is that territory inhabited by the Estonian tribes – *Estonum nationes*.¹⁰⁰ Before turning to a consideration of these different 'tribes', we should call attention to the exception, which from Henry's time onwards has persisted in the mentality of the Estonians: Ösel (Est. Saaremaa). That Henry's *insula Osiliensium* ('the island of the Öselians')¹⁰¹ – would be distinguishable from the mainland of Estonia is obvious from the geography, but the differentiation is stronger than merely spatial. When Henry describes the Estonians' great military expedition to Treiden in 1211, he notes that the army was accompanied by *omnes seniores de Osilia et Rotalia et de universa Estonia* ('all of the elders of Ösel, Rotalia and all of Estonia'); one interpretation of this statement is that here the chronicler is drawing a distinction between Ösel and Estonia.¹⁰² However, in the call to rise up against the Danes and the Germans in 1223, 'the word went out through all of Estonia and Ösel' (*exivit verbum per totam Estoniam et Osiliam*), and here it is likely that Henry is pointing to Ösel's distinctive position.¹⁰³ Henry customarily designates the inhabitants of Ösel as *Osiliensis* or *Osiliani*, never once mentioning that by this he means, for example, *Estones Osilienses* (Estonians of Ösel), a construction that he does use in the designation

⁹⁶ See also Enn Tarvel, 'Sakala ja Ugandi kihelkonnad', *Keel ja Kirjandus* 10 (1968), 586–96 (here 586–7).

⁹⁷ HCL XXIII.9, p. 165; Brundage, p. 183.

⁹⁸ HCL XIV.8, p. 80; Brundage, p. 102.

⁹⁹ HCL XVI.1, p. 101; Brundage, p. 121.

¹⁰⁰ HCL XV.3, p. 90; Brundage, p. 111.

¹⁰¹ HCL XXIII.10, p. 167; Brundage, p. 186.

¹⁰² HCL XV.3, p. 89; Brundage, p. 109.

¹⁰³ HCL XXVI.8, p. 191; Brundage, p. 210.

Estones Maritimi ('coastal Estonians').¹⁰⁴ Only once does the expression *gentes Osiliane, que habitant in insula maris* ('the Öselian people, who lived on an island of the sea') appear in the chronicle, but this may likelier be a reference to the pagan tribes of Ösel, as Tarvel translates, rather than to any independent tribal structure indigenous to Ösel.¹⁰⁵ For this reason Henry's *Osiliani Waldiensis* refers only to those islanders inside the *Waldia* (Ger. Wolde, Est. Valjala) fort, or to those of the parish of Waldia.¹⁰⁶

Designating the inhabitants of Ösel by the toponym, using the Latin form *Osilienses/Osiliani*, thus needs no more specific corroboration, since this is an instance of a very old social practice and historical tradition. The endurance of this tradition is attested by examples such as the occurrence of the eponym *Tzarelayn* in the fifteenth-century sources,¹⁰⁷ the word *saarlased* in present-day Estonian, and *Öselaner*, which has remained in Baltic-German parlance.

Let us now return to the question of who Henry means by the covering term Estonians – *Estones*? Naturally Henry was not the first to adopt this Latin ethnonym. Rather, this is his acquired knowledge, behind which one can sense a very old tradition of naming the people settled in the territory that we know from the Livonian chronicle to be Estonia, and who communicated among themselves in a comprehensible language, or, more properly speaking, by means of dialects. We are by no means certain that the ethnonym *Estones* was the Estonians' self-designation; more likely, what we see here is the name given to them by neighbouring peoples and tribes living in the Baltic Sea region. No supporting evidence can be found in Henry's chronicle for the hypothesis proposed by Paul Ariste in 1951 that in previous centuries Estonians referred to themselves as *maarahvas* ('people of the land').¹⁰⁸

On the contrary, Henry's chronicle surprises us with a system for identifying Estonians according to provinces or even smaller places. The following catalogue, which includes the *Osiliensis/Osiliani* discussed above, is very expressive:

¹⁰⁴ HCL XXVI.3, p. 188; XXIX.1, p. 207; XXIX.4, p. 211.

¹⁰⁵ HCL XXX.3, p. 217; Brundage, p. 240; Kleis and Tarvel, *Henriku Liivimaa kroonika*, p. 267.

¹⁰⁶ HCL XXX.5, p. 220; Brundage, p. 243. Here Henry designates Waldia as the strongest city (*urbs*) among the other cities of the Öselians.

¹⁰⁷ Paul Johansen and Heinz von zur Mühlen, *Deutsch und Undeutsch im mittelalterlichen und frühneuzeitlichen Reval* (Cologne and Vienna, 1973), p. 174.

¹⁰⁸ Paul Ariste, 'Maakeel ja eesti keel', *Eesti NSV Teaduste Akadeemia Toimetised, Ühiskonnateaduste seeria* 5/2 (1956), 117–27; see the recent critique of this notion by Jürgen Beyer, 'Ist maarahvas ("Landvolk"), die alte Selbstbezeichnung der Esten, eine Lehnübersetzung? Eine Studie zur Begriffsgeschichte des Ostseeraums', *ZfO* 56/4 (2007), 566–93; cf. Riho Grünthal, *Liivista liiviin. Itämerensuomalaiset etnonymit* (Helsinki, 1997), pp. 187–91.

<i>Ugaunia</i>	–	<i>Ugaunenses</i>
<i>Saccala</i>	–	<i>Saccalanenses</i>
<i>Rotalia</i>	–	<i>Rotalienses</i>
<i>Revele</i>	–	<i>Revelenses</i>
<i>Harien</i>	–	<i>Harionenses</i>
<i>Gerwa</i>	–	<i>Gerwanenses</i>
<i>Vironia</i>	–	<i>Vironenses, Virones</i>
<i>Maritima</i>	–	<i>Maritimi, Estones de Maritima</i>
<i>Osilia</i>	–	<i>Osilienses, Osiliani</i>
<i>Mone</i>	–	<i>Monenses</i>
<i>Waldia</i>	–	<i>Waldienses</i>
<i>Tarbata</i>	–	<i>Tarbatenses</i>
<i>Warbola</i>	–	<i>Warbolenses</i>

Here we can easily find the eight ancient provinces of Estonia, as these had emerged by the beginning of the thirteenth century.¹⁰⁹ The Estonian province of Wiek (Est. Läänemaa) is the exception, and in this catalogue it is represented in two parts – *Maritima* and *Rotalia*.

Läänemaa, which spanned the coastal areas of western Estonia, and which was known in the later Middle Ages by the name *Wiek*, was apparently a loose union of parishes in Henry's time. Yet Henry is precise in his designations when, in connection with the military expedition to *Rotalia* in winter 1215, he mentions that those parishes (*provinciae*) located *circa maris latis sitas* ('round about the seashore'), are called *Rotelewic* and *Rotalia*.¹¹⁰ As distinct from the latinized *Rotalia*, *Rotelewic* is an ancient Nordic form, already containing the word *wic*, meaning 'bay' or 'bend in the seacoast'. The interpretation of the Latin *Maritima* in Henry's text is also problematic. Enn Tarvel is of the opinion that the Latin form, or at least *Maritima provinciae*, is borrowed from the Bible.¹¹¹ Among the events of 1224, the chronicle mentions *Maritima cum septem kiligundis* ('*Maritima* with seven *kiligunds* [parishes]'), adding slightly later that *Maritima* had seven provinces (*provincias*).¹¹² When describing William of Modena's attempt to create a papal state in Estonia in 1225, Henry writes: 'Illam vero kiligundam, que Maritima vocatur, cum alia tota Maritima et Vironia et Gerwa in summi pontificis acceptit potestatem' ('The *kiligund* which is called the Maritime, together with the whole Maritime [province], Vironia and Jerwia,

¹⁰⁹ Lembit Jaanits, Silvia Laul, Vello Lõugas and Evald Tõnisson, *Eesti esiajalugu* (Tallinn, 1982), p. 401.

¹¹⁰ HCL XVIII.5, p. 119; Brundage, p. 138.

¹¹¹ Kleis and Tarvel, *Henriku Liivimaa kroonika*, p. 113, n. 33.

¹¹² HCL XXVIII.2, p. 200; XXVIII.7, p. 205.

he took into the power of the supreme Roman pontiff').¹¹³ Enn Tarvel asserted that Henry used both *Rotalia* and *Maritima* in three different meanings – as the whole of Wiek, as a part of Wiek and as a single parish of Wiek.¹¹⁴ Our excursus has effectively shown that the factual evidence must be subjected to critical analysis, and that Henry's inconsistency adequately reflects the extent of the knowledge he had been able to acquire, such as while accompanying the priest Peter Kaikewalde to complete the baptizing of Wiek.¹¹⁵ Yet this does not prevent Henry from naming the inhabitants of Rotalia – *Rotalienses* – and the parishes *Rotalienses provinciae*, or, to be precise, the parishes of the Rotalians.¹¹⁶ Henry has referred to the inhabitants of Maritima as *Maritimi*, but on three occasions has permitted the explanatory designation *Estones Maritimi*.¹¹⁷ From the latter it follows clearly that Henry considers these people simply as maritime Estonian, not as a separate tribe. This may well turn out to be the key to the comprehension of other similar ethnonyms.

For the purposes of identifying the inhabitants of the six remaining ancient provinces – *Ugaunia*, *Saccala*, *Revele*, *Haria*, *Gerwa* and *Vironia*, Henry creates separate Latin designations derived from their names. As a rule, once he adopts a designation, he uses it consistently, sometimes with small modifications, as in *Vironenses/Virones*. However, another characteristic feature of Henry's linguistic practice becomes apparent when he names the ancient provinces of Estonia along with the words *provincia* or *terra*. In these cases the chronicler does not use the designation for the province, but rather, as a rule, the designation for its inhabitants. So, for example, Henry writes *provincia Vironensis*, that is, 'province of the Vironians', *provincia Saccalanensis*, *provincia Harioensis*, and *Gerwanensis provincia*; even, in one instance, *terra Gerwanensis*, 'the land of the Jerwians'. From this the next controversial question arises: which came first, the designation for the ancient province or the names for its people? Henry's chronicle leaves the distinct impression that the names of the inhabitants, those unusual topoethnonyms, are derivations from the names of the provinces, but this is not a completely solid conclusion. No topoethnonyms have been derived in the chronicle for the names of the small provinces on Estonian territory – *Waiga*, *Nurmegunde*, *Mocha*. However, Henry does use this method of naming for some smaller places. In

¹¹³ HCL XXIX.7, pp. 213–14; Brundage, p. 236.

¹¹⁴ Enn Tarvel, 'Läänemaa seitse kihelkonda', *Keel ja Kirjandus* 5 (1971), 292–8 (here 293).

¹¹⁵ HCL XXVIII.7, p. 205.

¹¹⁶ HCL XXV.2, p. 180.

¹¹⁷ HCL XXVI.3, p. 188; XXVI.5, p. 189; XXVI.11, p. 192; XXVIII.2, p. 200; XXVIII.7, p. 205; XXIX.1, p. 207.

addition to the above-named *Waldienses*, he mentions the inhabitants of the island of *Mone* (Moon, Est. Muhu), or rather, those *Monenses* killed in 1227 in the *castrum Monense* ('fort of Moon').¹¹⁸ A similar mode of naming also occurs in Henry's narrative in the case of the people of 'the fort of Dorpat' (*castrum Tharbatense*) and 'the fort of Warbola' (Est. Warbola; *castrum Warbole* or *Warbolense*), or the inhabitants of the parish of Warbola, who were attacked in the winter of 1220.¹¹⁹

The intricate system which Henry used for the designations of the Estonians can therefore not be deemed a direct reflection of ethnic differences. By no means denying dialectal differences that may have prevailed on Estonian territory at the beginning of the thirteenth century, Henry's system instead corresponded to the developing and changing territorial divisions of the time. In order to make sense of this, the priests who were carrying out the baptism of pagan tribes and the warriors conducting military conquest shaped a model of identification that fulfilled their practical needs.

The Germans, their Allies, Rivals and Enemies

It can be assumed that as an ethnic German, Henry would not have had problems with designating his compatriots who, like himself, had come to Livonia, the new colony, from Germany. Just like the main protagonist of Henry's chronicle, Bishop Albert *de Bekeshovede* (r. 1199–1229), many of them continued to travel back and forth between their motherland and their new bridgehead in the Baltic. Like the majority of thirteenth-century chroniclers, Henry knows the German motherland on the other side of the sea as *Theuthonia*, or *Theutonia*, and only once does he mention its synonym, *Alimania*.¹²⁰ Thus, when referring in his chronicle to the Germans, Henry uses the Latin *Theutonici* almost without exception. Indeed, one might assume that Henry, as a priest of German extraction, does not need to write of his compatriots in any other terms but 'we – *nos*', or 'ours – *nostri*', but quite to the contrary, what prevails in his narrative is *Theutonici*. This might be considered another example of the position of the bystander or observer, and as we recall from above, Henry only refers to himself in the third person, allowing himself only very infrequent, anonymous statements in the first person. In the context of the first attempt to divide Estonia in 1216, he adds, '... but, since the division did not last, I have thought

¹¹⁸ HCL XXX.5, p. 220.

¹¹⁹ *Tharbatenses* – HCL XXVI.7, p. 190; XXVII.3, p. 196; XXIX.1, p. 207; *Warbolenses* – HCL XXIII.9, p. 167; XXIII.10, p. 167.

¹²⁰ HCL X.11, p. 41.

it useless to describe it', and instead makes the statement, 'Let me rather say that the Rigans, Livs, and Lettgallians assembled again ...'¹²¹ The meticulous style and linguistic usage of the Latin chronicle reveals relatively few Germanisms, leaving aside the names of the nobles who came from Germany. Only once does Henry mention *lingua Theuthonicorum*, namely at the juncture where the Lettgallians, when fighting against the Lithuanians in 1221, had to resort to military cunning and shout German phrases to trick the Lithuanians into believing that they were being pursued by the Germans.¹²²

Besides *Theutonici*, Henry's chronicle also recognizes *Saxones* – the Saxons – as a designation for the Germans. On several occasions Henry uses *Saxonia* in conjunction with *Westfalia*, both of which were regions from which Germans flowed into Livonia. Therefore it is conceivable that here the chronicler meant Saxons in the narrow sense, but it is likewise possible that it was the foreigners themselves, migrating in from Saxony, who left a word designating German in several languages of the Baltic area, including Livish, Estonian (*saks*, *sakslane*) and Finnish.¹²³

Similarly to the above-mentioned topoethnonyms, Henry uses a separate designation for the Germans settled in Riga – *Rigenses* – the Rigans. This term excludes the aforementioned *Lyvones Rigenses*. Those who assembled for the military expedition of 1216 included the Rigans, the Livs, the Lettgallians, Master Volquin with his Sword Brethren, the crusaders and Theodoric with the bishop's men;¹²⁴ Henry often mentions *Rigenses et Lyvones* side by side. A precise definition of the *Rigenses* in Henry's sense cannot be provided, despite Friedrich Benninghoven's claim that it encompassed all the clerics of Riga, the Sword Brethren from the city, the bishop's vassals, pilgrims, the *frequentantes* or merchants and traders from Germany and Visby, as well as citizens of Riga, and *seniores Rigenses* and *universi Rigenses*, among whom might also be found some baptized Livs, Estonians and Lettgallians.¹²⁵ Unfortunately, the evidence in Henry's chronicle is insufficient to warrant claims for such an extensive and diverse assemblage.

Though the terms *Frisones* (the Frisians) and *Gothi* (the Gotlanders) make a few passing appearances in the text of the chronicle, they only serve to corroborate the range of Henry's knowledge. However, in the chronicle narrative we also encounter the Danes and the Swedes, who are represented as

¹²¹ HCL XX.2, p. 135; Brundage, p. 155.

¹²² HCL XXV.4, p. 184; Brundage, p. 203.

¹²³ Kleis and Tarvel, *Henriku Liivimaa kroonika*, p. 31, n. 6.

¹²⁴ HCL XX.2, p. 135.

¹²⁵ Friedrich Benninghoven, *Rigas Entstehung und der frühbaltische Kaufmann* (Hamburg, 1961), p. 48, n. 142; see also Johansen, 'Die Chronik als Biographie', p. 21.

both the Germans' allies and their rivals in the Lord's vineyard. Henry refers to the Swedes primarily in connection with their unsuccessful attempt to establish a foothold in Estonia, in Rotalia, and at *Lealense castrum* ('the fort of Leal [Est. Lihula]) in 1220. The chronicler waxes ironic with respect to his Christian rivals, noting that the Swedes had preached, baptized and built churches in the province of Rotalia, where the Rigans had previously baptized the Estonians. Finding themselves between the Danes in Revalia and the Germans in Livonia, he writes, the Swedes had shown too little fear for the pagans, and had paid dearly for it when ferociously attacked by the Öselians.

The attitude evinced by the Livonian chronicle toward the Danes (*Dani*) is similarly ambivalent. Henry himself reports how the bishops of Livonia, led by Bishop Albert, made an embassy to the Danish king in 1218 to ask for aid, that the latter would send his naval forces to Estonia in the following year.¹²⁶ Henry writes in detail of the battles of Danish, German and Slavic warriors with the Revalians and the people of Harria in the battle of Lyndanise in 1219.¹²⁷ However, he was soon to experience the Danes becoming competitors with the Rigan priests in the baptizing and rebaptizing of the inhabitants of Vironia and Jerwia, and the outbreak of fierce conflicts between Danish and German Christians in the subjugation of the pagan lands.

The image of the Russians in the Livonian chronicle is even more complicated and ambivalent. Henry's general designation for the Russians is *Rutheni*, which corresponds to the overall term *Ruscia* – Russia.¹²⁸ For more specific identifications, Henry uses expressions such as *Rutheni de Plecekowe* (Russians from Pskov) or *Nogardenses*, for the Russians from Novgorod; this latter term is derived from *Nogardia*, the Latin form for Novgorod.

In any case, when writing about the Russians, Henry is in a predicament. As a rule, the Russians in the Livonian chronicle are enemies.¹²⁹ Together with the Livs and the Lettgallians, they take part in a conspiracy against the Rigans in 1206 and 1210; they are characterized by 'two-faced cunning' (*victa dolositas*); they hatch secret plans with the Lithuanians.¹³⁰ Together with the Estonians they fight against the Germans, and in 1216, Vladimir, knyaz (prince) of Polotsk,

¹²⁶ HCL XXII.1, p. 147.

¹²⁷ HCL XXIII.2, pp. 154–6.

¹²⁸ See also Anna-Dorothee von den Brincken, *Die 'Nationes Christianorum Orientalium' im Verständnis der lateinischen Historiographie von der Mitte des 12. bis in die zweite Hälfte des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Cologne and Vienna, 1973), pp. 142–3.

¹²⁹ Cf. Christoph Schmidt, 'Das Bild der "Rutheni" bei Heinrich von Lettland', *ZfO* 44/4 (1995), 509–20; Anti Selart, *Livland und die Rus' im 13. Jahrhundert* (Cologne, 2007), pp. 176–80.

¹³⁰ HCL X.3, pp. 34–5; X.12, p. 42; XIII.4, p. 69; XIV.5, p. 75.

assembles a large army of Russians and Lithuanians to destroy the Livonian church.¹³¹ Thus the Russians are the enemies of the Germans, except for the incident in 1210, when the Pskov Russians come to 'our' aid, and undertake a military expedition to Sontagana (Est. Soontagana) in Estonia.

And yet Henry remains within the bounds of precision, and does not declare the Russians to be non-Christians. He places the Russians and pagans side by side, and testifies that on the occasion of the conquest of the fort of Kokenhusen in 1208, they did not dare kill the Russians who pulled back into the fort, because they were called Christians (*propter nomen christianitatis*).¹³² In 1209 Bishop Albert called the Russians 'fellow Christians' (*conchristiani*). But the knyaz of Polotsk reproached the bishop of Riga in 1212, calling for him to cease baptizing the Livs, since it was in his power whether or not to baptize the Livs, who were his own slaves, after all. Henry adds: 'It is, indeed, the custom of the Russian kings not to subject whatever people they defeat to the Christian faith, but rather to force them to pay tribute and money to themselves.'¹³³ However, Henry turns these political tensions to the advantage of the Livonian church, and writes that the Livs had appealed to the bishop of Riga to free them from 'the yoke of the Russians' (*iugo Ruthenorum*). Likewise, in 1214, the sons of the Lettgallian elder Thalibald subjected themselves to Bishop Philip, promising 'to change over from the Christian faith as they had received it from the Russians to the Latin use ...'¹³⁴ Henry was able to recognize that the 1225 conquest of Dorpat, when *Estones omnes et Rutheni simul cum rege sunt interfecti* ('all of the Estonians and Russians, together with the king, were killed')¹³⁵ was a significant turning point in the subjugation of mainland Estonia.

The most onerous enemies of the Livonian colony in Henry's time were the Lithuanians. Lithuanian military expeditions to Livonia and Estonia – the perpetual 'Lithuanian threat', one might even say – constitute one of the central themes of the chronicle. Henry designates the Lithuanians with the Latin word *Letthones*, in the use of which there are only a few small orthographic modifications (*Lethones*, *Letones*, *Leththones*, *Lettones*), and only once does the narrative err by using a term of Slavic origin, *Litowini*.¹³⁶ Henry's Lithuanians are pagans *par excellence*, 'the enemies of the name of Christ' (*inimicos nominis Christi*); in the context of 1219, the chronicler stresses the ferocity shown by the Semigallians, Lithuanians and Curonians

¹³¹ HCL XIX.10, p. 134.

¹³² HCL XL.8, p. 56.

¹³³ HCL XVI.2, p. 103; Brundage, p. 122.

¹³⁴ HCL XVIII.3, p. 116; Brundage, p. 136.

¹³⁵ HCL XXIX.1, p. 207; Brundage, p. 229.

¹³⁶ HCL XXV.3, p. 182.

against the Christian name (*ferocitas contra nomen christianum*).¹³⁷ To the Lithuanian *homo dives et prepotens* Suelgate,¹³⁸ Henry attributes the threat to destroy the *civitas Dei* ('city of God'), presumably referring to Riga.¹³⁹ However, it is almost as if Henry stands in awe of this formidable enemy of the Livonian Christians, at least as far as military force is concerned. Henry writes that the Lithuanians are 'swifter and more brutal than other peoples' (*velociiores et crudeliores aliis gentibus*); they fly on their speedy horses, and he emphasizes their 'audacity' (*audacia*), 'quick-wittedness' (*subtilitas*) and 'ferocity' (*ferocitas*).¹⁴⁰ The fear of the Lithuanians is of course realistic: when the Selonians are baptized in 1208, they vow to keep their distance from the Lithuanians; the Semgallians greatly fear a Lithuanian attack that same year, and Henry resorts to overtly apocalyptic metaphors, that the Livs and the Lettgallians were *cibus et esca* ('food and provender') for the Lithuanians.¹⁴¹ After the 1208 military expedition with the Semgallians to Lithuania, Henry wisely concedes that the Lithuanians were at that time so dominant over all the peoples dwelling in the land, both Christian and pagan, that no one dared live in small villages there;¹⁴² then in 1225, after the conquest of Dorpat, peace came, the likes of which had not been known for the preceding 40 years, because of the Lithuanians and other pagan tribes.¹⁴³ The idyllic peace Henry speaks of here was an illusory image. However, against its background, the chronicle weaves an image of Lithuanians as warlike pagans which was to persist for a long time in the tradition of Christian history.

It is fitting to conclude our antiquarian research on the catalogue of peoples and tribes in Henry's chronicle with exotic but historical reports on the Tatar (*Tatari*) attack *in terra Valvorum paganorum*, 'whom some refer to as *Parthi*, and who do not eat bread, but nourish themselves rather on the raw meat of their herd animals'.¹⁴⁴ Today we know that these were the nomadic Turkic people of Cumans (Russ. Polovtsy), who fell victim to the Tatars, or, more precisely speaking, to the Mongols. However, we do not know Henry's source for this information, nor the source for his description of the Tatars' great victory in the Battle of the Kalka River, which Henry dates as 1222, as distinct from the date

¹³⁷ HCL XI.6, p. 54; XXIII.4, p. 158.

¹³⁸ HCL IX.1, p. 25; Brundage, p. 47: 'a rich and very powerful man ...'

¹³⁹ HCL IX.4, p. 28.

¹⁴⁰ HCL XI.5, p. 53; Brundage, p. 73; XII.2, p. 60; Brundage, p. 80; XII.3, p. 60; XIII.1, p. 66; XXIII.3, p. 156.

¹⁴¹ HCL XIII.4, p. 69; Brundage, p. 91.

¹⁴² HCL XIII.4, p. 69; Brundage, p. 90.

¹⁴³ HCL XXIX.1, p. 207.

¹⁴⁴ HCL XXVI.1, p. 186; Brundage, p. 205.

1223 adopted by Russian historiography, based on the preference for the greater reliability of the Novgorod First Chronicle over Henry's Livonian chronicle.¹⁴⁵

Conclusions: Henry's World of Christians and Heathens

The point of departure for this study was the provocative epithet, Henry the ethnographer, since from the modern reader's perspective, this seemed the best designation for the rich legacy of such 'ethnographic' material transmitted to posterity by the chronicle. When rereading Henry's chronicle, it is difficult to restrain one's wonder at the way almost every other paragraph of the text contains names for different peoples and tribes; the chronicle as a whole contains hundreds of them. Such extraordinary frequency cannot be regarded as merely self-evident; after all, a gulf of centuries separates us from its writing, and we are not equipped to understand sufficiently all the motives and driving forces behind Henry's narrative composition. The simple thought articulated by Paul Johansen that Henry's chronicle is but a partially altered narrative of lived experience deserves to be acknowledged. At another juncture Johansen points to Henry's inner naiveté, his simple and deep religiosity, since 'he lives and moves only in the world of the Latin Bible and liturgical formulas, and almost always expresses himself in the words of the Bible, as if all of life were but a single act of worship'.¹⁴⁶ To return once again to the chronicle's 'ethnic catalogue', one might even discern a duality in Henry's worldview – on the one hand, a heavenly vision of a baptized Livonia, the addition of Mary's Land to the shining, transparent system of the 'Gothic cathedral' of Christendom (Johansen's metaphoric idea), and on the other, the persistent, heavy earthly battle to spread the seeds of Christian truth among the pagans.

Were not the words borrowed from the Gospel of St Matthew, and put into the mouth of Bishop Albert in 1212 – 'Ite, docete omnes gentes, baptizantes eos in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti' ('Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit')¹⁴⁷ – Henry's own highest duty, which as a priest he had vowed to fulfil? Accordingly, what Henry recorded, and what perhaps the papal legate William of Modena urged him to write, was the chronicle of the hard earthly battle waged in the name of teaching and baptizing these peoples.

¹⁴⁵ Johansen, 'Die Chronik als Biographie', p. 13 supposes that Theodoric, the brother of Bishop Albert, who married the daughter of the knyaz of Pskov, was the source of news on the tragic Battle of Kalka.

¹⁴⁶ Johansen, 'Die Chronik als Biographie', p. 12.

¹⁴⁷ HCL XVI.2, p. 103; Brundage, p. 122; Matthew 28:19.

However, this motive alone cannot explain the recording of all of the peoples and tribes, let alone the formation of topoethnonyms. If we reread the chronicle from a narratological point of view and imagine what Henry's narrative would look like without the ethnic designations, or indeed if these were replaced by personal pronouns or impersonal words such as 'Christians' and 'pagans', the text would become difficult to comprehend, if not outright unreadable.¹⁴⁸ Therefore all of these names – Livs, Lettgallians, Estonians, Germans, Rotalians, Vironians, Öselians, and so on – unconsciously serve a very definite purpose in the text Henry composed: to make connections, to impart detail and colour to a great narrative, which is both attractive and reliable. And in this way Henry's chronicle is extraordinary, for, as Johansen claimed, Henry does not compile or gather together material from other chronicles or written sources.¹⁴⁹

Yet even Henry's 'narratological aspect', of which he himself was perhaps no more conscious than that he was following biblical models, cannot completely explain the outstanding richness of the chronicle's 'ethnic catalogue'. One must point to the young missionary Henry's natural curiosity, his excellent memory and, considering thirteenth-century circumstances, his highly unusual linguistic ability. Through successive rereadings, one has an ever stronger sense of Henry's veiled wish to demonstrate his knowledge, weaving the names of different peoples into the sentences of each paragraph with passion. One example to support such a suspicion is a passage from the last chapter of the chronicle, which almost has the effect of a play on words. Henry is narrating how William of Modena, who had arrived in Gotland in the late spring of 1226, summoned Christians to take revenge on the perverse Öselians:

The Germans obeyed and took the cross. The Gotlanders refused. The Danes did not hear the Word of God. Only the German merchants wanted the heavenly merchandise for themselves. They got horses, prepared weapons, and came to Riga. The Rigans rejoiced and went out to meet them as they arrived. The baptized Livs, Lettgallians, and Esthonians also rejoiced that they might carry the Christian name to the unbaptized Öselians.¹⁵⁰

These concluding ideas are not meant to put an end to the discussion of the ethnic aspects of Henry's chronicle. The main purpose of this study has rather been to broach the subject of the chronicle's rich material on ethnicity,

¹⁴⁸ Cf. Tony Davenport, *Medieval Narrative: An Introduction* (Oxford, 2004), pp. 92–105.

¹⁴⁹ Johansen, 'Die Chronik als Biographie', p. 6.

¹⁵⁰ HCL XXX.1, p. 216; Brundage, p. 239.

which has become the traditional foundation for national histories, but which requires further detailed examination through the collaborative work of linguists, cultural anthropologists, ethnologists and historians.

Chapter 4

Henry the Interpreter: Language, Orality and Communication in the Thirteenth-century Livonian Mission

Alan V. Murray

Introduction

Henry of Livonia is best known to posterity as the author of the *Chronicon Livoniae*, the narrative that constitutes our most important single source for the early crusades and mission to the medieval region corresponding to modern Latvia and Estonia. Yet his work as a chronicler was only one of Henry's spheres of activity during his long career, as becomes evident if we examine the descriptive terminology applied to him during his lifetime. On six occasions he is described by three different terms that relate to his clerical status: *sacerdos* and *minister* within the chronicle and *plebanus* in two documents issued in 1234 and 1259 respectively.¹ There are two other instances of descriptive terminology applied to Henry, both of which come from the chronicle itself. On the occasion of his ordination as priest in 1207–08 he is referred to as the *scolaris* of Bishop Albert of Riga, while in connection with the year 1212, he is described as both priest and interpreter of the bishop (*sacerdos ipsius et interpres*).²

The Latin term *interpres* points to a third significant sphere of activity in Henry's life in Livonia beyond his duties as priest and his writing of the

¹ HCL XI.7, p. 62: *Heinricus sacerdos*; XVII.6, p. 114: *sacerdotes Alabrandus et Henricus*; XXIV.1, p. 169: *Henricus Lettorum minister de Ymera*; XVI.3, p. 107: *sacerdos ipsius et interpres Henricus de Lettis*; Hermann Hildebrand, *Livonica, vornämlich aus dem 13. Jahrhundert im Vaticanischen Archiv* (Riga, 1887), p. 49: *Henricum de Papendorpe et Salomonem de Lotohea plebanus Rigensis diocesis*; Max Perlach, 'Urkunden des rigaschen Capitel-Archives in der Fürstlich Czartoryskischen Bibliothek zu Krakau', *Mittheilungen aus dem Gebiete der Geschichte Liv-, Est- und Kurlands* 13 (1886), 1–23: *Heinricum plebanum de Papendorpe* (pp. 20–23).

² HCL XI.7, p. 55; XVI.3, p. 107.

chronicle. In classical Latin, the word *interpretes* had three principal meanings. The first, deriving from the root meaning of an agent acting between two parties, is that of an intermediary or negotiator. The other two meanings are related: one who explains (such as the significance of omens of auguries), or an interpreter or translator.³ It is the final meaning which became more common in medieval Latin and ultimately prevailed in modern English and the Romance languages; given the relative lateness of Henry's chronicle, it is likely that it is this sense which is intended in his use of the term.⁴ The word *interpretes* occurs four times in total in the chronicle, although in the single instance where it unambiguously refers to Henry himself, it is inconclusive. The other three occasions, by contrast, show a clear linguistic context. In two cases it relates to the *interpretes* Theodoric and Philip, and is used in connection with their missionary activities in Estonia. They are described in terms which imply that they were acting as auxiliaries to the priest Salomon, and since Henry here stresses Philip's Lithuanian origins, it is evident that they were acting as interpreters or translators for Salomon.⁵ The final occurrence is the most intriguing. In the winter of 1205–06, a 'play of the prophets' (*ludus prophetarum*) was performed in Riga as an aid to the instruction of neophytes and pagans.⁶ Although Henry claims that this innovative procedure was only meant to explain the 'rudiments of the Christian faith', his description indicates that in fact it portrayed several episodes from the Old and New Testaments in some detail. The events being acted out were explained to the assembled audience by an *interpretes*, who may even have been, as argued by Arbusow, Bauer and others, Henry himself.⁷ The chronicle's short description of the play raises several questions about its performance. It is unclear whether it was performed in Latin, which we would expect for most religious drama of this period, or in the vernacular, that is the Low German tongue spoken by the majority of the Christian immigrants in Riga. From the perspective of practicalities, it is easier to accept that the events portrayed were explained by

³ *A Latin Dictionary*, ed. Charlton T. Lewis and Charles Short (Oxford, 1966), p. 984; *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, 2 vols (Oxford, 1968), vol. 1, p. 947.

⁴ The word occurs relatively rarely in the Vulgate, but usually in the sense of translation or explanation, for example, Genesis 40:23, 42:23, 1 Corinthians 14:28.

⁵ HCL XV.9, p. 99.

⁶ HCL IX.14, p. 32. For more detailed discussion of this episode, see Reinhard Schneider, 'Straßentheater im Missionseinsatz: Zu Heinrichs von Lettland Bericht über ein großes Spiel in Riga 1205', in *Studien über die Anfänge der Mission in Livland*, ed. Manfred Hellmann (Sigmaringen, 1989), pp. 107–21, and Chapter 9 by Nils Holger Petersen in this volume.

⁷ Leonid Arbusow and Albert Bauer, 'Einleitung', in HCL, pp. x–xi.

the interpreter in summary fashion, rather than by a process of simultaneous translation, which would have been far more difficult to execute in the circumstances. Nevertheless, this task must have called for both extensive biblical knowledge and competence in one or more Western languages, as well as that of the local Livish population.

Three out of four occurrences of the term *interpretes* in the chronicle thus clearly relate to the activity of translation or interpretation. This linguistic sense is supported by Henry's obvious interest in foreign languages, which is evident in his quotation of lexical items of indigenous origin.⁸ The aim of this chapter is to examine Henry's knowledge of languages, and to establish the nature of his activity as translator or interpreter within the context of the thirteenth-century Livonian mission.

The Linguistic Challenge of the Livonian Mission

At the end of the twelfth century almost all of the pagan populations of the eastern Baltic region spoke a variety of tongues belonging to two separate and unrelated language groups: the Finnic sub-branch of the Finno-Ugric group and the Baltic branch of the Indo-European family.⁹

The Finno-Ugric languages were to be found in the central and northern areas of the region, and were the first to be encountered by the Livonian mission.¹⁰ The earliest missionary centres at Üxküll (Latv. Ikšķile), Holme (Latv. Mārtiņšala) and Riga were established in the territory of the Livs, whose Latin name (*Lyvones*) was used by the Christian conquerors to denote the entire region

⁸ Leonid Arbusow, 'Das entlehnte Sprachgut in Heinrichs "Chronicon Livoniae". Ein Beitrag zur Sprache mittelalterlicher Chronistik', *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 8 (1951), 100–153 (here 145–51).

⁹ Finno-Ugric has traditionally been regarded, along with Samoyedic, as one of the two great divisions of the Uralic language family, although some scholars dispute this; there is no general agreement among specialists on the precise structure of the constituent branches of Uralic. This issue is immaterial to the discussion of medieval Livonia. The Livish, Estonian, Finnish, Izhorian and Votian languages are all accepted as belonging to a sub-branch of Uralic known variously as Finnic, Fennic or Balto-Finnic. Since these latter terms are not generally well known to non-specialists in the English-speaking world, and are potentially open to some ambiguity, this chapter will use the term Finno-Ugric to refer to all the languages of this sub-branch in the eastern Baltic region, in contrast to the Indo-European languages belonging to the Germanic, Slavic and Baltic language groups. See *The Uralic Languages*, ed. Daniel Abondolo (London, 1998).

¹⁰ Thierry Canava, 'Les peuples fenniques dans la Chronique d'Henri le Letton', *Études finno-ougriennes* 26 (1994), 99–119.

covered by modern Latvia and Estonia, including areas inhabited by other peoples.¹¹ Although the Livish language has dwindled over the centuries to the point where it is now spoken by a mere handful of people, in the missionary period the Livs inhabited almost the entire eastern coast of the Gulf of Riga from the River Salis (Latv. Salaca) in the north as far as the basins of the Düna (Latv. Daugava, Est. Väina, Russ. Dvina) and the Livonian Aa (Latv. Gauja) in the south, as well as the northern parts of the Curonian peninsula on the western side of the gulf.¹² The Livs were outnumbered by the members of various Estonian tribes who inhabited the mainland areas to the north as far east as the River Narva and Lake Peipus (Est. Peipsi järv, Russ. Chudskoe ozero), as well as the islands of Ösel (Est. Saaremaa), Dagö (Est. Hiiumaa) and Moon (Est. Muhu) off the western coast. To the east of the Estonian regions, in the area south of the Gulf of Finland between the rivers Narva and Neva, were two smaller peoples with Finno-Ugric languages: the Votians (or Votes) in the western parts and the Izhorians (sometimes known as Ingrians) further to the east. Unlike the various Estonian and Livish tribes, who were still more or less autonomous at the beginning of the Baltic crusades, the lands inhabited by the Votians and

¹¹ On the early missionary activities at Üxküll and Riga, see Manfred Hellmann, 'Die Anfänge christlicher Mission in den baltischen Ländern', in *Studien über die Anfänge der Mission in Livland*, pp. 7–35; Bernhard Jähnig, 'Die Anfänge der Sakraltopographie von Riga', in *Studien über die Anfänge der Mission in Livland*, pp. 123–58; Carsten Selch Jensen, 'The Nature of the Early Missionary Activities and Crusades in Livonia, 1185–1201', in *Medieval Spirituality in Scandinavia and Europe: A Collection of Essays in Honour of Tore Nyberg*, ed. Lars Bisgaard et al. (Odense, 2001), pp. 121–37; Jensen, 'The Early Stage of Christianisation in Livonia in Modern Historical Writings and Contemporary Chronicles', in *Medieval History Writing and Crusading Ideology*, ed. Tuomas M.S. Lehtonen and Kurt Villads Jensen (Helsinki, 2005), pp. 207–15. Holme was an island in the River Düna, also known as Martinsholm or Meinardsholm: *Baltisches historisches Ortslexikon, 2: Lettland (Südlivland und Kurland)*, ed. Hans Feldmann and Heinz von zur Mühlen (Cologne, 1990), s.v. 'Holme'.

¹² Evald Tõnisson, *Die Gauja-Liven und ihre materielle Kultur (11. Jahrhundert – Anfang 13. Jahrhunderts). Ein Beitrag zur ostbaltischen Frühgeschichte* (Tallinn, 1974); Eberhard Winkler, *Salis-livische Sprachmaterialien* (Munich, 1994), pp. 11–13; Christopher Moseley, *Livonian* (Munich, 2002), pp. 1–10. In his chronicle Henry maintains an important distinction between *Lyvones*, referring to the native Livish population, and *Lyvonenses*, referring to all of the inhabitants of the wider territory that came to be known as Livonia. This distinction is not observed in Brundage's translation of Henry's chronicle, nor by much linguistic scholarship, which often uses the term 'Livonian' for the Finnic language and its speakers. In order to avoid ambiguities, this chapter will use the terms 'Livs' and 'Livish' for this ethnic group; 'Livonia' and 'Livonian' will be used for the Christian-ruled polity and the entirety of its inhabitants, both native and immigrant.

Izhorians had been incorporated into the territory of the Novgorodian state by the end of the twelfth century.¹³

Speakers of Baltic languages were to be found in the more southern parts of the eastern Baltic region. The lands to the east and south of the Livish coastal territory were inhabited by speakers of various Lettish dialects, whose descendants eventually coalesced to form the modern Latvian people: Lettgallians, Semgallians, Selonians and Curonians. Beyond the Lettish peoples lay the Lithuanian principalities. At the time of Henry of Livonia, the Lithuanian princes had not yet begun their great eastward expansion which would bring vast numbers of Christian Slavs under their rule, and the Lithuanian-speaking areas roughly corresponded to the territory of the modern republic of Lithuania.

In the course of the thirteenth century, attempts were made by German and Danish crusaders and ecclesiastical authorities to Christianize all of these peoples, with varying degrees of effort and success.¹⁴ This raises the question of how the process of conversion functioned on a linguistic level, but the practical aspects of this issue have received little attention in scholarship.¹⁵ There were three distinct major tasks that required sufficient linguistic knowledge to facilitate effective communication between the native peoples and the Christian conquerors. First, at the highest political level, it was necessary to negotiate with native leaders to establish the terms on which the pagan peoples would agree to the acceptance of Christianity, a move which was as much a political as a religious decision. Related tasks might involve negotiations of truces or terms for placement of Christian garrisons in pagan territory.¹⁶ Such activities constituted the most important challenge to

¹³ Sergei S. Gadzyatskii, 'Водская и Ижорская земли Новгородского государства', *Исторические записки* 6 (1940), 100–148; Evgeniya L. Nazarova, 'The Crusades against Votians and Izhorians in the Thirteenth Century', in CCBF, pp. 177–95; Anti Selart, 'Confessional Conflict and Political Co-operation: Livonia and Russia in the Thirteenth Century', in CCBF, pp. 151–76. The medieval Izhorians or Ingrians should not be confused with the Finns who migrated into this region in the seventeenth century, and who were often subsequently known as Ingrians. This latter population was dispersed as a result of Soviet repressions in the twentieth century.

¹⁴ The existence of Henry's chronicle means that we are best informed about the German mission based at Riga. For Danish missionary activities, see especially Torben K. Nielsen, 'The Missionary Man: Archbishop Anders Sunesen and the Baltic Crusade, 1206–21', in CCBF, pp. 95–117.

¹⁵ For example, the otherwise exemplary study by Hellmann, 'Die Anfänge christlicher Mission in den baltischen Ländern', does not consider the linguistic aspects of the Livonian mission.

¹⁶ For the political aspects of the Christianization process, see Tiina Kala, 'The Incorporation of the Northern Baltic Lands into the Western Christian World', in CCBF, pp. 3–20.

communication between Christians and pagans, since misunderstandings might easily have drastic and far-reaching consequences. Second, once the native peoples had accepted the new faith in principle, there would necessarily be regular low-level communication in which the local representatives of the Christian powers, such as the commanders of the military orders or the advocates of the Livonian bishoprics or the Danish Crown, administered justice and imposed the obligations that came with the new political reality: taxes, labour dues and military service. The latter activity was one area where effective communication was crucial, and Henry's chronicle indicates that some native troops were taught commands in German for use on campaign.¹⁷ Third, there was the need to carry out baptism and conversion of the populations that agreed to accept Christianity. It is difficult to know with certainty how intensively the latter activity was carried out. At the least it must have involved some preaching to explain the basic tenets of the Christian faith, admonitions to attend church services and pay tithes, and prohibitions such as abstaining from pagan worship and customs such as cremation. On occasion more unusual acts of interpreting were also carried out, as in the case of the *ludus prophetarum* performed at Riga.

These diverse tasks of communication could only have been carried out with the assistance of Westerners who had learned native languages, or of natives who had learned Low German, Danish or Swedish and, where religious activities were concerned, Latin. As Christian rule was consolidated in Livonia, there was a growing likelihood of individuals growing up in the region with knowledge of both immigrant and indigenous languages, and one can assume that, eventually, lower-level daily communication between immigrants and natives was regularly carried out by such individuals.¹⁸ However, in the first decades of the conversion period it must have been relatively rare to find Christian immigrants with more than a rudimentary knowledge of indigenous languages, or equally, natives with competence in the Western tongues. One of the very few known individuals in the latter category included an Estonian monk named Nicholas, who was sent back to his native land to take part in a mission organized by Eskil, archbishop of Lund (r. 1137–77), in 1170–71. His rarity value can be seen from the fact that Pope Alexander III (r. 1159–81) had to ask the archbishop of Nidaros to allow Nicholas to leave the monastery in Norway where he was resident.¹⁹

¹⁷ HCL XXV.4, p. 184: '... Theuthonici primo venerunt ad prelium, et Letti omnes subsequabantur clamantes, sicut edocti fuerant, lingua Theuthonicorum, ut caperent, raperent, interficerent.'

¹⁸ Ineta Polanska, 'Zum Einfluß des Lettischen auf das Deutsche im Baltikum' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Otto-Friedrich Universität Bamberg, 2002), pp. 19–20.

¹⁹ Tore Nyberg, 'Deutsche, dänische und schwedische Christianisierungsversuche östlich der Ostsee im Geiste des 2. und 3. Kreuzzuges', in *Die Rolle der Ritterorden in der*

Presumably the German merchants who visited the mouth of the River Düna and formed the first nucleus of support for the Livonian mission in the 1180s acquired a basic knowledge of Livish in the course of their trading activities, or found natives who were able to pick up some Low German. Yet trading could be carried out with a minimum of spoken language, possibly augmented by signing; it is therefore questionable how far the linguistic knowledge gained by either side in mercantile activity could have been employed in the more complex tasks of political negotiation and religious instruction. Before this time it must have been near impossible for Westerners to gain detailed knowledge of any of the Baltic or Finno-Ugric languages, with the exception of Finnish. The Swedes had taken control of western and southern Finland in the second half of the twelfth century and so presumably there were ample opportunities for Swedes and Finns to learn each other's languages.²⁰

After the beginning of the Livonian mission the possibilities for language learning increased. In 1200 the bishop of Riga, Albert von Buxhövdén (r. 1199–1229), sent a contingent of some 30 young Livs as hostages back to Germany, possibly to the monastery at Segeberg in Holstein.²¹ In theory these youths could have provided the raw material for German missionaries to learn Livish. However, this was not a straightforward task, even assuming that capable learners could be found. It would be hundreds of years before there were descriptive grammars, dictionaries or standardized orthographies for Estonian, Livish or Lettish, and the only written aids available would presumably have been word lists compiled by the teachers or learners themselves, assuming, of course, that

Christianisierung und Kolonisierung des Ostseegebietes, ed. Zenon Hubert Nowak (Toruń, 1983), pp. 93–114 (here 101–2); Iben Fonnesberg-Schmidt, 'Pope Alexander III and the Baltic Crusades', in *Medieval History Writing and Crusading Ideology*, pp. 242–56 (here 245).

²⁰ Thomas Lindkvist, 'Crusades and Crusading Ideology in the Political History of Sweden, 1140–1500', in CCBF, pp. 119–32; *När kom svenskarna till Finland?*, ed. Ann-Marie Ivars and Lena Huldén (Helsinki, 2002).

²¹ HCL IV.4, p. 14; V.1, p. 15. Paul Johansen, 'Die Chronik als Biographie: Heinrich von Lettlands Lebensgang und Weltanschauung', *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, n.s. 1 (1953), 1–24 (here 9–12) assumes that the hostages were sent to Segeberg. This is possible, since Segeberg was closely connected with the Livonian mission and we know of other native converts being trained there, but it is not actually named as the hostages' destination by Henry. The Swedes evidently had a similar facility for training at the monastery of Roma on Gotland, since several Estonian-speaking monks from there were deployed in Estonia in 1219: Nyberg, 'Deutsche, dänische und schwedische Christianisierungsversuche östlich der Ostsee im Geiste des 2. und 3. Kreuzzuges', pp. 102–3.

they did not use purely oral methods.²² The agglutinative character of all of the Finno-Ugric languages and their significant structural differences from German and Latin would have made learning Livish or Estonian an extremely difficult and time-consuming task. For religious purposes, language acquisition had an additional dimension. Native religious beliefs were predominantly of animist character, involving veneration of sacred objects, sites and animals, as well as higher deities. The indigenous languages did not possess the requisite vocabulary to fully explain the complex concepts of Christian belief and expound what was expected of neophytes in worship and religious life; missionaries might well need to resort to circumlocutions or neologisms which would require particular linguistic ability.

In the *Chronicon Livoniae* we can identify several individuals who were involved in translation and interpreting in the processes of preaching and conversion, either because they are explicitly described as interpreters, or because contextual information makes it clear that they were involved in these activities. One priest, John, had been born in Vironia (Ger. Wierland, Est. Virumaa) in northern Estonia but captured by the Christians while still a boy. He was sent to the monastery of Segeberg by Meinhard, the first bishop of Livonia (r. 1186–96). After being ordained, he returned to Livonia and was killed in 1206 while preaching to the Livs at Holme.²³ In 1212 Bishop Albert sent the priest Salomon to preach to the Estonians of the province of Saccala (Est. Sakala), accompanied by two interpreters (*interpretes*) named Theodoric and Philip. The form *Theodericus* is a Latinized version of the forename which appears in Middle Low German as *Di(e)derik* and Middle High German as *Dietrich*; it is thus likely that this individual was German by origin, since a biblical or saint's name would have been more appropriate for a convert, as in the cases of Philip, John and others. Theodoric's co-interpreter Philip, by contrast, was of Lithuanian origin (*de gente Lettonum*) and had been brought up at the court of Bishop Albert. All three missionaries were martyred by the Estonians.²⁴ In 1215 a priest named Peter, surnamed Kakuwalde or Kaikuwalde, and identified as originating from Finland, was sent on a mission to different parts of Estonia along with Otto, who as a priest belonging to the Order of the Sword Brethren can be identified as German. Peter worked again in Estonia

²² Even surviving materials for learning the major Western languages and Greek are relatively rare. See Bernhard Bischoff, 'The Study of Foreign Languages in the Middle Ages', *Speculum* 36 (1961), 209–44, reprinted with additions in Bischoff, *Mittelalterliche Studien: Ausgewählte Aufsätze zur Schriftkunde und Literaturgeschichte*, vol. 2 (Stuttgart, 1967), pp. 227–45.

²³ HCL X.6–7, pp. 36–7.

²⁴ HCL XV.9, p. 99.

along with Henry the chronicler, who had previously been ministering to the Letts, and later with another, unnamed priest.²⁵

Two features are noticeable about the practical aspects of these linguistic activities. The first is that on campaigns which took them beyond the vicinity of Riga, missionaries were evidently sent out in twos or threes. This was a fairly well-established practice, in order that they could offer each other mutual support. However, the combinations found indicate that often a native was paired with a Westerner, as in the cases of Peter Kakuwalde with Otto and later with Henry, and of Philip with Theodoric. This might suggest that the linguistic expertise of a single individual was often insufficient for the tasks of communicating with the native peoples. Native interpreters would need to be accompanied by ordained priests for baptism to be carried out; it may also have been thought that while priests of native origin possessed the necessary linguistic skills, they did not always have sufficient theological or pastoral knowledge to function on their own. The second point, which may help explain the first, is that indigenous converts were used as interpreters and also trained as priests, but they were not restricted to areas where their native languages were spoken. The Estonian John from Vironia is known to have preached to the Livs in the Düna region, while the Finn Peter Kakuwalde was deployed in Estonia. These dispositions are understandable; both John and Peter could reasonably be expected to acquire proficiency in other Finno-Ugric languages which were closely related to their own mother tongues. However, the case of the interpreter Philip is less easy to understand. His native Lithuanian dialect would have offered no real help in communicating to monoglot speakers of Estonian. However, Philip was clearly a valued member of the Livonian mission who was carefully trained in the household of the bishop of Riga. In a situation where expertise in both Western and indigenous languages was a rarity, one of the most obvious qualifications for employment as a missionary was an existing, demonstrable linguistic proficiency, irrespective of which languages this comprised.

The Linguistic Knowledge of Henry of Livonia

These considerations bring us to the question of Henry's role in the Livonian mission, and in particular his knowledge of regional languages and the means of

²⁵ HCL XIX.4, p. 127 (*sacerdotes Petrus Kakuwalde de Vinlandia ...*), XIX.7, p. 132; XXIV.1, pp. 169–70 (*Petrus Kaikewalde de Vinlandia*), XXIX.7 p. 214. Christian Krötzel, *Pietarin ja Paavalin nimissä: Paavit, lähetystyö ja Euroopan muotoutuminen (500–1250)* (Helsinki, 2004), pp. 226, 240.

their acquisition. There is no longer any serious doubt that Henry was a German immigrant to Livonia; the forensic skills of Holtzmann, Johansen and Arbusow have identified an origin in the region of Magdeburg, the great missionary archbishopric on the River Elbe in eastern Saxony founded in the Ottonian period. Henry's chronicle indicates that after he went to Livonia around 1205, he was active in areas which in the early thirteenth century were inhabited by tribes who spoke various dialects of the Livish, Estonian and Lettish languages, and so most commentators have assumed that he gained knowledge of all three tongues as part of his training as a missionary, in addition to his native Low German and the Latin that was the basis of all formal education in Western Europe.²⁶ A competence spanning four different language groups from both Indo-European and Finno-Ugric families – Germanic (Low German), Romance (Latin), Baltic (Lettish) and Finnic (Livish and Estonian) – would have made Henry a quite remarkable and near uniquely gifted individual in his time.

Before investigating the precise extent of Henry's linguistic knowledge, we should perhaps ask how he could have acquired it. In a highly influential article published in 1953, Paul Johansen attempted to reconstruct Henry's biography on the basis of information contained within the chronicle. Some of Johansen's conclusions are fairly speculative, such as the hypothesis that Henry was taken as a pilgrim to Livonia at the age of twelve by his father. It is more plausible, although by no means certain, that Henry was educated at Segeberg, since this monastery had strong connections with missionary activities in the Baltic region.²⁷ Assuming that this was the case, he may well have had the opportunity to learn some of the native languages of Livonia, as we know that converts, such as John of Vironia, were sent to Segeberg for training. However, how many of these languages Henry may have learned during his putative education at Segeberg, and the extent of his competence in them, are open to debate. The most important component of any clerical education at this time would have been to learn to read, write and speak Latin fluently and to know the text of the Bible and the liturgy of the Roman church. These tasks must have taken the bulk of any student's time, and indeed, the

²⁶ Robert Holtzmann, 'Studien zu Heinrich von Lettland', *Neues Archiv der Gesellschaft für ältere deutsche Geschichtskunde* 43 (1920), 159–212; Johansen, 'Die Chronik als Biographie'; Arbusow, 'Das entlehnte Sprachgut', pp. 145–51; James A. Brundage, 'Introduction to the 2003 Edition', in Henricus Lettus, *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, trans. Brundage, 2nd edn (New York and Chichester, 2003), pp. XXIX–XXX. For a detailed synthesis of arguments indicating Henry's German origins, see especially Leonid Arbusow, 'Die mittelalterliche Schriftüberlieferung als Quelle für die Frühgeschichte der ostbaltischen Völker', in *Baltische Lande*, vol. 1: 'Ostbaltische Frühzeit', ed. Albert Brackmann and Carl Engel (Leipzig, 1939), pp. 167–203.

²⁷ Johansen, 'Die Chronik als Biographie'.

analyses of Henry's use of Latin by Bilkins and Arbusow confirm that the language of the Vulgate and the liturgy permeates the chronicle.²⁸

The issues of opportunity and difficulty must give pause for thought as to how much, if any, of the native languages Henry was able to learn before he actually travelled to Livonia. A further argument for caution is that Henry is described as a *scolaris* on the first occasion he is mentioned in the chronicle, which might suggest that he was still engaged in formal study even after he arrived in Riga.²⁹ A knowledge of Latin would have been standard for anyone who had received a clerical education, and so it would have been additional qualifications or aptitude, as in the case of the Lithuanian interpreter Philip, that would identify suitable candidates for training as interpreters or missionary priests. Why, then, was Henry selected for this task?

At the time that Henry was growing up in eastern Saxony, the regions to the north of Magdeburg, that is the Altmark, the Havelland and the Fläming, were inhabited by their original Slavic-speaking populations, alongside the more recent immigrants from western Saxony, Frisia, Holland and Flanders. Germanization speeded up after the capture of Brandenburg in 1157 by the Ascanian ruler Albert the Bear (r. 1157–70), but it was by no means a universal process, and both north and south of the River Elbe there were still large numbers of Slavs. One of the most telling testimonies to this phenomenon is the survival of significant Slavic-speaking populations into the modern period. In the region south of the Elbe now known as the Hannoversches Wendland, some three days' journey north-west of Magdeburg, a Slavic dialect (the so-called Draveno-Polabian) survived among the rural population until the mid-eighteenth century.³⁰ Further to the east, a sizeable community of Slavic speakers, the Sorbs, has survived in the Lausitz region up to the present day.³¹

Since Henry originated in the region of Magdeburg, it is quite possible that he may have grown up with fluency in both Slavic and Low German. It is even quite possible that he may have had Slavic ancestry himself. Certainly, a knowledge of Slavic would explain why he was selected for training as an

²⁸ Wilis Bilkins, *Die Spuren von Vulgata, Brevier und Missale in der Sprache von Heinrichs Chronicon Livoniae* (Riga, 1928); Arbusow, 'Das entlehnte Sprachgut'.

²⁹ HCL XI.7, p. 55.

³⁰ Reinhard Olesch, 'Finis Lingvae Dravaenopolabiae', in *Festschrift für Friedrich von Zahn*, vol. 1, ed. Walter Schlesinger (Cologne, 1968), pp. 623–37; Olesch, 'Zur geographischen Verbreitung des Dravänapolabischen', in *Festschrift für Friedrich von Zahn*, vol. 2: *Zur Sprache und Literatur Mitteldeutschlands*, ed. Reinhard Olesch and Ludwig Erich Schmitt (Cologne, 1971), pp. 126–37.

³¹ Ewa Rzetelska-Fedelsko, 'Das Elb- und Ostseeslawische', in *Einführung in die slawische Sprachen*, ed. Peter Rehder, 3rd edn (Darmstadt, 1998), pp. 165–70.

interpreter and missionary. Considering the relative lack of opportunities to learn any of the Finno-Ugric or Baltic languages in Germany, the existing knowledge of an additional vernacular language, such as Slavic, was probably the best indication that someone was capable of learning the unfamiliar tongues of the eastern Baltic region, and thus marked out Henry as a candidate to become a *scolaris* of the bishop of Riga, and ultimately his interpreter.³²

When Henry arrived in Livonia, the main effort of the Christian mission was still largely concentrated on the Livs, who inhabited the coastal areas; as we have seen, it is probable that he was employed as an interpreter during the performance of a missionary drama during his first winter in Riga. However, he was later appointed as a minister to the Letts, and eventually was given a parish which is now generally identified as Papendorf (Latv. Rubene) on the River Ūmera (Latv. Jumara) where the Letts apparently constituted the majority of his congregation.³³ He was also active among the Estonians in the 1220s with Peter Kakuwalde; interestingly, during this preaching campaign he was still associated with the Letts, since he is described as *Henricus Lettorum minister de Ymera*.³⁴ From this evidence it might seem at first sight that Henry had a good knowledge of Livish, Lettish and Estonian. Yet the activities of preaching and baptism are not in themselves evidence of competence in these languages; from examples previously discussed, we know that some missionary priests made use of interpreters, and since Henry worked with Peter Kakuwalde in Estonia, it is conceivable that he had an interpreter at his disposal among the Letts.

Another category of evidence which has been advanced for Henry's knowledge of Baltic and Finno-Ugric languages is the corpus of lexical items of indigenous origin cited within the Latin text of the chronicle. One problem in interpreting such words, however, is that by the beginning of the missionary period, several of them were common currency among the different languages of the eastern Baltic region. The words *watmal* and *waypa*, denoting types of cloth, and *oseringus*, meaning silver jewellery used as currency, were of Germanic origin but had passed into common use in Estonian, Livish and Lettish.³⁵ Similarly,

³² Another indication of the extent of interaction between the German and Slavic languages in medieval Germany is the fact that the dominant German word for interpreter in the later medieval and modern periods, *Dolmetsch(er)* (Middle High German *tolmetze*, *tolmetsche*), is of Slavic origin (cf. Polish *thumacz*, Sorbian *tolmač*): *Deutsches Wörterbuch*, ed. Jacob Grimm and Wilhelm Grimm, vol. 2 (Leipzig, 1860), pp. 1231–2.

³³ Arbusow and Bauer, 'Einleitung', in HCL, p. XI; Johansen, 'Die Chronik als Biographie'.

³⁴ HCL XXIV.1–2, pp. 169–72.

³⁵ Arbusow, 'Das entlehnte Sprachgut', p. 148; Winkler, *Salis-livische Sprachmaterialien*, pp. 88–103.

Henry's use of the word *nogata*, a term for currency derived from Old Russian, does not by itself necessarily mean that he had a knowledge of the Russian language.

Other words of non-Latin and non-German origin quoted by Henry can be assumed as being less common, particularly in cases where he gives glosses for them, and these potentially can yield rather more information about his linguistic knowledge. We need, however, to remember that very little is known about the forms of the indigenous languages of Livonia at this time; in fact, apart from place names cited in earlier sources, it is Henry's chronicle which provides the first surviving written evidence of the Estonian, Livish and Lettish languages, which were not recorded systematically until the early modern period. The representation of Livish in the chronicle is especially problematic, since the last speakers of the language in the area between the Salis and the Düna died out in the late nineteenth century, and their language was only partially recorded. Most extant data on the Livish language derives from the small relict population which survived on the northern coast of Curonia.³⁶ This variety was heavily influenced by modern Latvian, and the character of the other medieval Livish dialects may have been significantly different. Nevertheless, the various Finno-Ugric languages spoken in the region formed a linguistic continuum. Neighbouring dialects were probably mutually intelligible, and thus it is likely that speakers of southern Estonian and Livish could understand each other's languages.³⁷ A significant number of Finno-Ugric words and proper names are cited in the chronicle, but it is not always possible to establish whether Henry's knowledge of them derived from Estonian or Livish.³⁸ Two of the most common indigenous words to appear in the chronicle are *maia* and *malewa*. The first of these, used by Henry to denote a military camp or gathering place, is known from modern Estonian *maja* but also Curonian Livish *mõi*, both forms meaning 'house', 'quarters' or derivatives.³⁹ *Malewa* is used to mean 'militia' and clearly relates to later Estonian *malewa* or *malev*, but since it is mostly used by Henry to describe the auxiliary levies of Livs

³⁶ Lauri Kettunen, *Livisches Wörterbuch mit grammatischer Einleitung* (Helsinki, 1938), p. vii.

³⁷ For information on several aspects of the history of the Estonian language, I am indebted to Dr Kristiina Ross (Institute of the Estonian Language, Tallinn), Dr Marek Tamm (Tallinn University) and Dr Heiki Valk (University of Tartu). Any errors are, of course, my own.

³⁸ Paul Alvre, 'Eesti ja liivi keeleaines Henriku Liivimaa kroonikas', *Keel ja Kirjandus* 6 (1984), 335–42; 9 (1984), 538–43; 1 (1985), 32–6, 2 (1985), 96–105.

³⁹ HCL XV.7, p. 94; XXIII.7, p. 160; XXIII.9, p. 167; Kettunen, *Livisches Wörterbuch*, p. 229a; Ferdinand Johann Wiedemann, *Ehstnisch-deutsches Wörterbuch/Eesti-Saksa Sõnoraamat*, ed. Jakob Hurt (St Petersburg, 1893), col. 566.

and Letts who fought alongside the crusaders, it is equally if not more likely that he acquired the term from a cognate Livish form.⁴⁰

In some cases contextual information allows us to establish the language of origin of words cited by Henry. One such case relates to an attack by Estonian tribes on a fort held by the Livish leader Caupo. Henry depicts the Estonians as threatening that they would remain there for ever until they had either destroyed the fort or forced the Livs to ally themselves with them. The idea of remaining is represented by Henry in the speech of the Estonians by the word *magetac*, while one of the Livs is depicted as retorting to the threat with the words *maga magamas*, glossed by Henry as meaning 'you will remain here for eternity'.⁴¹ Both parties appear to have used a word known in both languages, related to the terms for 'sleep' or 'stay', and this example gives clear evidence that on occasion speakers of Estonian and Livish could communicate without the need for intermediaries.⁴² Other Estonian words which can be identified by language and context are *kilegunda*, meaning district or province (modern Estonian *kihelkond*, 'parish'), used by Henry only in connection with the geography of Estonia,⁴³ and two glosses from a situation where the captive priest Frederick of Zelle is mocked by Estonians from the island of Ösel, *laula* 'sing' and *pappi* 'priest'.⁴⁴ There are also Henry's own explanations of Estonian toponyms, such as Odenpäh (Est. Otepää), glossed as *Caput ursini* (Est. *ott* 'bear' and *pää/pea* 'head'),⁴⁵ and the loan translation *Mater aquarum* (Est. *ema* 'mother' and *jõgi* 'river, stream') for the River Embach (Est. Emajõgi).⁴⁶

This evidence indicates that Henry had knowledge of at least a dozen lexical items derived from Finno-Ugric languages, that is, either Livish or Estonian. It is logical that he should have had a working knowledge of Livish, since the Christian mission at Riga was situated in Livish-speaking territory, and one can

⁴⁰ HCL IX.3, p. 27; XIV.8, p. 79; XIX.9, p. 134; XX.2, p. 136; XXIII.7, p. 161; Wiedemann, *Ehstnisch-deutsches Wörterbuch*, col. 568.

⁴¹ HCL XV.3, p. 89, Brundage p. 110: '... ibidem se magetac, id est manere in perpetuum, promittunt, donec aut castrum destruant aut Lyvones ad suum consensum emolliant, ut eodem itinere secum ad destruendam Rigam vadant. Et ait Lyvo de castro: "Maga magamas," id est: Iacebis hic in eternum.'

⁴² Kettunen, *Livisches Wörterbuch*, p. 214; Wiedemann, *Ehstnisch-deutsches Wörterbuch*, col. 512.

⁴³ HCL XXVIII.2, p. 200; XXVIII.8, p. 206; XXIX.7, p. 213; XXX.5, p. 221; Wiedemann, *Ehstnisch-deutsches Wörterbuch*, col. 277.

⁴⁴ HCL XVIII.8, p. 121.

⁴⁵ HCL XII.6, p. 63: 'castrum Odenpe, id est caput ursi'; Wiedemann, *Ehstnisch-deutsches Wörterbuch*, col. 719, 790.

⁴⁶ HCL XV.7, p. 96; Wolfgang Laur, *Deutsche Orts-, Landes- und Gewässernamen in den baltischen Ländern* (Lüneburg, 2001), p. 24.

assume that learning this language was the highest priority for Henry. What is less understandable is that the chronicle shows only a single example of Lettish; this is the word *draugs*, latinized as a masculine noun (*draugus*) in the phrase *draugum suum*, meaning 'friend' or 'ally'.⁴⁷ It is generally accepted that Henry occupied a parish at Papendorf where the Letts apparently constituted the majority of his congregation, and so it is strange that the chronicle does not give more evidence that Henry was conversant with the Lettish language. Does this mean that Henry was primarily employed to translate Livish and Estonian, and that possibly he functioned as a parish priest with the aid of an interpreter? From the testimony of lexical items alone it is difficult to do more than speculate, and both positive and negative evidence of the types just discussed can be problematic. We need to bear in mind that a familiarity with individual words from foreign languages does not in itself constitute evidence of any degree of fluency, particularly in the cases of languages with a fundamentally different structure to one's own. In order to establish Henry's linguistic competence, we therefore need to pursue different approaches in addition to the demonstrable knowledge of single lexical items.

Representations of Orality in the *Chronicon Livoniae*

One alternative approach to this question is to examine instances in which actual spoken language is represented in the chronicle. This is still a relatively little studied aspect of medieval narrative sources, but it is one that is worth more detailed investigation. The use of direct speech, whether real or imagined, was one of the main ways with which chroniclers could lend immediacy, colour and, above all, verisimilitude to their narratives. Authors had to make conscious decisions about when to quote direct speech and when merely to report or summarize it, and so an examination of its use can direct us to passages which the author thought had a particular importance. In the case of Henry's chronicle, the selection of instances of direct speech was conceivably even more significant than in most historical narratives, since many of them deal with communication between Christians and indigenous peoples; the extent to which such attempts at communication were understood could thus present either a significant barrier or a boost to the process of Christianization.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ HCL XVI.4, p. 108: 'draugum suum, id est consocium'.

⁴⁸ For an example of this approach, see Alan V. Murray, 'Voices of Flanders: Orality and Constructed Orality in the Chronicle of Galbert of Bruges', *Handelingen der Maatschappij voor Geschiedenis en Oudheidkunde te Gent*, n.s. 48 (1994), 103–19.

Table 4.1 Instances of direct speech in the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia

Ch.	L	Date	T	Speaker	Context	Language
I.11a	18	1195	Sp	Livs	Livs deceitfully try to bring back Meinhard	Liv → Ger
I.11b	11	1195	Sp	Livs	Livs ironically greet Meinhard	Liv → Ger
II.5	33	1198	Sp	Livs	Livs try to persuade Bertold to withdraw army	Liv → Ger
II.8	18	1198	Sp	Livs	Remove rites of baptism	Liv
IX.1	52	1205	Sp	Suelgate	Lithuanian leader speaks to companions, threatening later attack on Riga	Lith
X.4	61	1206	Sp	Bishop Albert	Speaks to ambassador of Vladimir of Polotsk	Ger → Russ
X.10	7	1206	Sp	Dabrel (Livish leader)	Encourages his men against Christians	Liv
XI.5a	1	1207	Sp	Lithuanian (anon.)	Disdain when finding no plunder in church of Kipsal	Lith
XI.5b	12	1207	Mdt	Bishop Albert	Summons Livs and Letts to join expedition	Ger → Liv
XI.5c	22	1207	Sp	Lithuanian leader (anon.)	Demands of garrison of Lennwarden to know whereabouts of Christian army	Lith → Liv/Lett (?)
XI.6	27	1207	Sp	Christians	Make demands on Selonians to convert	Ger → Lett
XII.2	23	1208	Sp	Christians	Encourage Semgallians to attack Lithuanians	Ger → Lett
XII.6a	39	1208	Dial	Letts	Reject peace with Estonians	Lett → Est
XII.6b	19	1208	Sp	<i>Russin (Lett)</i>	Glories in defeat inflicted on Estonians of Sakkala	Lett
XIII.4a	27	1209	Sp	Vsevolod of Gersike	Laments burning of Gersike	Russ
XIII.4b	61	1209	Sp	Bishop Albert	Offers peace terms to Vesvolod of Gersike	Ger → Russ
XIII.5	12	1209	Sp	Estonian elders	Restrain Estonians of Ungaunia from killing Alabrand, envoy of Bishop Albert	Est
XIV.8a	14	1210	Sp	Caupo	Counsels waiting for arrival of Rigans to join Letts and Livs in attack on Estonians	Liv
XIV.8b	19	1210	Sp	<i>Arnold (Sword Brother)</i>	Encourages fellow Germans before battle with Estonians	Ger

XIV.11a	27	1211	Sp	<i>Berthold of Wenden</i>	Calls on Estonians of Fellin to accept Christianity	Ger → Est
XIV.11b	40	1211	Dial	<i>Germans/ Estonians of Fellin</i>	Germans call on Estonians, who acknowledge power of Christian God	Ger ↔ Est
XV.3	2	1211	Sp	<i>Liv (Christian)</i>	Threatens attacking Estonians (Livish words)	Liv → Est
XV.7	40	1211	Dial	<i>Estonians/Letts</i>	Estonians threaten Letts. Letts reply	Est ↔ Lett
XVI.3	12	1212	Sp	<i>Bishop Albert</i>	Reproaches Livs for lack of faith and abandoning Christianity	Ger → Liv
XVI.4a	7	1212	Sp	<i>Livs (apostates)</i>	Apostate Livs encourage each other	Liv
XVI.4b	124	1212	Dial	<i>Bishop Albert/Livs (apostates)</i>	Albert sets conditions for satisfaction	Ger ↔ Liv
XVI.4c	148	1212	Sp	<i>Alabrand</i>	Reproaches apostate Livs	Ger → Liv
XVIII.2	39	1214	Dial	<i>Alabrand/ Vladimir of Polotsk</i>	Alabrand reproaches Vladimir	Ger ↔ Russ
XVIII.8	3	1215	Sp	<i>Öselians</i>	Mock a captured priest as he is murdered (cited in Estonian)	Est
XVIII.9	9	1215	Sp	<i>Bishop Albert and Rigans</i>	Mourn for those killed in battle against Lithuanians, citing 2 Kings 1.25–27	Ger
XIX.3	13	1215	Sp	<i>Thalibald (Lett)</i>	Defies Estonians torturing him	Lett → Est
XIX.5a	59	1215	Sp	<i>Albert Sluc (ship's captain)</i>	Encourages Christians during naval battle with Estonians	Ger
XIX.5b	8	1215	Pr	<i>Bishop Philip of Ratzeburg</i>	Prays to Virgin Mary during naval battle (from Breviary)	Lat
XIX.6	49	1215	Pr	<i>Bishop Philip of Ratzeburg</i>	Gives thanks to God for delivery from Öselians (citing Psalms)	Lat
XIX.7	69	1215	Dial	<i>Bishop Albert/ Innocent III</i>	Albert asks for papal protection for Livonia	Lat
XIX.8a	25	1216	Sp	<i>Germans</i>	Call on Estonians to accept Christianity	Ger → Est
XIX.8b	22	1216	Dial	<i>Gotfrid (priest)/ Estonians</i>	Priest calls on Estonians to accept Christianity	Ger → Est
XX.6	22	1217	Sp	<i>Christians</i>	Call on Estonians to accept Christianity	Ger → Est
XXI.5a	32	1217	Sp	<i>Christians</i>	Call on Estonians to accept Christianity	Ger → Est
XXI.5b	25	1217	Sp	<i>Christians</i>	Offer peace terms to Estonians	Ger → Est
XXIII.3	54	1219	Dial	<i>Bishop Albert/ Semgallians</i>	Albert calls on Semgallians to accept Christianity	Ger ↔ Lett
XXIII.7	83	1219	Sp	<i>Rudolf, Master of Sword Brethren</i>	Calls on Estonian elders to accept Christianity	Ger → Est

Table 4.1 *continued*

XXIII.8	24	1220	Sp	Lithuanians	State intention to withdraw from invasion	Lith → Ger
XXIII.9a	14	1220	Sp	Estonians of Jerwia	Warn of Öselian attacks	Est → Ger
XXIII.9b	13	1220	Dial	<i>Albert of Saxony/a Christian</i>	Asks about identity of enemy	Ger
XXIII.9c	4	1220	Dial	Estonian women of Jerwia	Curse Öselians	Est
XXIII.9d	19	1220	Sp	<i>Volkwin, Master of Sword Brethren</i>	Offers Christianity and peace to people of Varbola	Ger → Est
XXIII.10	26	1220	Sp	<i>Volkwin, Master of Sword Brethren</i>	States claim of Riga over Harria	Ger → Dan
XXIV.5	60	1220	Sp	Estonian elder in Jerwia	Asserts that population had previously been baptized by Danes	Est → Ger
XXV.3	14	1221	Sp	Russians	Counsel retreat in face of Christians	Russ
XXVI.3	34	1222	Sp	Öselians	Offer terms to Christians in fort	Est → Ger
XXVI.13	32	1222	Sp	<i>Rigans</i>	Sword Brethren	Ger
XXVIII.5	68	1224	Sp	<i>Fredhelm, advocate</i>	Counsels storming of fort at Dorpat	Ger
XXX.5	3	1227	Sp	Öselians	Demand baptism	Est → Ger

Headings: Ch. = chapter number; L = length (number of Latin words); T = type of discourse.

Type (col. 4): type of discourse: Sp = speech; Dial = dialogue; Pr = prayer; Mdt = mandate.

Speaker (col. 5): speaker(s) of passage in direct speech: *italic* = Christian speakers; normal = enemy (pagan/apostate/orthodox) speakers.

Language (col. 7): probable language(s) of parties involved where passages in direct speech are cited: Dan = Danish; Est = Estonian; Ger = (Low) German; Lat = Latin; Lett = Lettish; Lith = Lithuanian; Liv = Livish; Russ = Russian.

↔ = use of language of addressees explicit; → = use of language of addressees implicit.

Henry's chronicle contains 54 cases of direct speech, which are introduced by verbs such as *inquit* or *ait* or participles such as *dicens* (see Table 4.1). The majority are simply speeches or statements attributed to individuals, but in several cases they are put into the mouths of plural speakers, such as groups or tribes among the native peoples. In some cases direct speech is represented as being made by two different parties, such as Christians and heathens, although in the majority of cases only one party is actually quoted. There is a considerable variation in length. The longest instance is a speech of 148 words, in which the missionary Alabrand reproaches some of the Livs for having abandoned Christianity.⁴⁹ The shortest example consists of a single word, when an unnamed Lithuanian warrior discovers that there is no plunder to be found in the church of Kipsal; according to Henry, he said 'ba!', and went away.⁵⁰ This is a fairly universal utterance of contempt, and so it is difficult to classify it linguistically. We are on clearer ground with two other short speeches, in which Livs and Estonians are quoted as using words in their own languages, such as the dialogue between Livs and Estonians cited above, or when the pagan Öselians torture the captured missionary Frederick of Zelle, taunting him with the Estonian words *Laula! Laula! Pappi*, that is 'Sing, sing, priest'.⁵¹

All other instances of direct speech are represented purely in Latin. In some cases this may be a reasonably accurate rendering of the medium of communication, as when Bishop Albert of Riga is described as speaking with Pope Innocent III (r. 1198–1216) at the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), since Latin was probably the only common language among the clerics at this gathering.⁵² Latin was also a frequent language of prayer, such as in the case when Bishop Philip of Ratzeburg is described as offering prayers and thanks for the safe delivery of his ship from the Öselians.⁵³ Nevertheless, it is clear from the context that in the remaining 49 examples, Henry is using Latin to represent speech which actually occurred in vernacular languages, whether those of the immigrant Western Christians (Low German and Danish) or of the indigenous Eastern peoples (Livish, Estonian, Lettish, Lithuanian and Russian). The representation of vernacular speech in Latin was of necessity common to most narrative sources produced in the central Middle Ages, but it was one which posed certain difficulties for their authors. It was impractical to record and reproduce complete texts of speeches, although key phrases could

⁴⁹ HCL XVI.4, pp. 110–11.

⁵⁰ HCL XI.5, p. 51: 'inquit: "Ba!" et exivit ad suos.'

⁵¹ HCL XVIII.8, p. 121.

⁵² HCL XIX.7, p. 132.

⁵³ HCL XIX.5, p. 129; XIX.6, p. 130.

be memorized and notes could be taken on wax tablets.⁵⁴ Vernacular discourse might be reproduced with a variety of possible vocabulary and styles in Latin. Authors who were influenced by the language of the Vulgate, such as Henry, would have a natural tendency to emulate this in their own prose; this was not necessarily an affectation or even a conscious decision, but simply a reflection of the linguistic register with which they were most familiar, since the staple of education at the time consisted of the Bible and florilegia of classical authors. Some authors tried to enliven their narratives by giving purported dialogue that they could not possibly have heard. Henry is not immune from this tendency, as, for example, when he has Prince Vsevolod of Gerzike lament his defeat by the Christians in particularly florid language. Since this happened in the aftermath of battle, when the king is described as being on the other side of the River Düna from the Christians, Henry could not possibly have heard this speech, whether or not he could have understood it.⁵⁵

In the majority of cases, however, the *content* of the communication – if not the words cited – is plausible, subject to the caveats already outlined. In 25 cases the speakers can be classified as enemies of the Baltic mission, that is, as pagans, apostates or Orthodox Russians. In all but five of these cases they are represented as communicating with the Christians, and so it is entirely plausible that the import of these speeches could have been recorded by Henry acting in his capacity of interpreter or by an informant. A similar or greater plausibility can be assumed for the 38 cases where the recorded speakers belong to the Christian side.

The complexities of communication become more apparent when we consider *which* languages may have been involved in the underlying historical situation described. From contextual information it is usually possible to extrapolate the likely language of the speaker or speakers, as well as the language of the addressees in cases where this was different. Out of the 54 examples of direct speech, 21 instances (39 per cent) feature *intra-linguistic* communication, that is, where speakers and addressees must have known the same language, such as when one of the Sword Brethren encourages his fellow Germans before battle.⁵⁶ However, 33 instances of direct speech (61 per cent) illustrate cases of *inter-linguistic* communication, that is, where it must be assumed that a speech was made by a speaker or speakers of one language to addressees who would normally have spoken another. So even though the use of a second language in such exchanges is more often implicit than explicit,

⁵⁴ Michael T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Records: England 1066–1307*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1993), pp. 118–25; *Les Tablettes à écrire de l'Antiquité à l'époque moderne*, ed. Elisabeth Lalou (Turnhout, 1992).

⁵⁵ HCL XIII.4, p. 70.

⁵⁶ HCL XIV.8, p. 79.

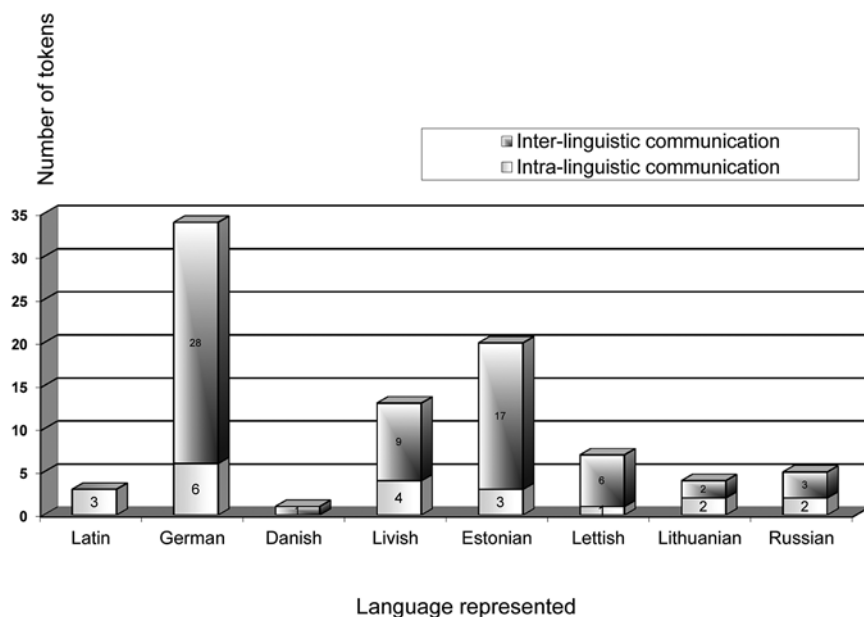


Figure 4.1 Extrapolated numbers of tokens of language use in instances of direct speech

each instance of inter-linguistic communication can be regarded as comprising two separate tokens of language use (66 in total). If we add these to the 21 instances of intra-linguistic communication, each of which can be counted as a single token of linguistic usage, we have a statistical representation of 87 tokens of language use.⁵⁷

It is evident that in the majority of cases of inter-linguistic communication, practical considerations would mean that some element of translation must have been involved. For example, in two passages relating to the year 1211, a force of Germans, Livs and Letts under Bertold of Wenden (d. 1217), commander of the Sword Brethren, is described attacking the fort of Fellin (Est. Viljandi) in Saccala. The Germans call on the Estonians of Fellin to abandon their false gods; eventually the Estonians ask for mercy and agree to accept the God of the Christians:

⁵⁷ See Figure 4.1 for a tabular representation of the linguistic tokens involved. The only case where the language of the addressees is not evident occurs in ch. XI.5c, where an anonymous Lithuanian leader is represented as speaking to a Christian force of Livs and Letts at Lennewarden (Latv. Lielvārde). The language of the addressees has been counted as a token of Livish in this instance.

On the sixth day the Germans said: 'Do you still resist and refuse to acknowledge our Creator?' To this they replied: 'We acknowledge your God to be greater than our gods. By overcoming us, He has inclined our hearts to worship Him. We beg, therefore, that you spare us and mercifully impose the yoke of Christianity upon us as you have upon the Livs and the Letts'.⁵⁸

This dialogue is crafted by Henry in a highly literary, stylized manner; the expression 'yoke of Christianity' derives from Matthew 11:29–30, and is hardly a likely turn of phrase to have been employed by pagan Estonians. Nevertheless, the act of communication that is represented in the passage is a plausible one, in that the surrender terms offered by the besiegers must have required a formal acceptance of Christianity and the overlordship of the Church of Riga. If we attempt to reconstruct how this communication functioned in practice, then either the Germans must have had their message translated into Estonian and proclaimed in that language to the defenders, or, if it was first proclaimed in (Low) German, one of the defenders must have translated it for his fellow Estonians. A similar situation must have prevailed in the reverse direction. Such a process of translation must therefore have involved one or more individuals with a working knowledge of German and Estonian. However, in cases where interpreters may have had imperfect knowledge of the target language, or were unavailable, the chain of communication may have been even more complex, possibly involving a third, intermediary language.

If we look at the content of the passages in direct speech, we find various recurring situations. Many illustrate instances of high drama which take place during fighting or which relate to their consequences: Christians can be found encouraging each other in battle or inciting allies against the foe,⁵⁹ offering counsel at critical points,⁶⁰ invoking divine assistance and offering thanks for delivery from the enemy,⁶¹ or mourning those killed in the fighting.⁶² Surprisingly, none of the examples of inter-linguistic communication relate to situations involving the preaching of the Christian faith to neophytes; most of them tend to depict confrontations between Christians and pagans

⁵⁸ HCL XIV.11 pp. 85; Brundage, pp. 106–7: 'Die sexto Theuthonici: "Numquid," inquit, "resistitis adhuc et creatorem nostrum non agnoscitis?" Ad hoc illi: "Cognoscimus Deum vestrum maiorem diis nostris, qui nos superando animum nostrum ad ipsius culturam inclinavit. Unde rogamus, ut parcendo nobis iugum christianitatis, sicut et Lyvonibus et Lettis, ita et nobis misericorditer imponatis."

⁵⁹ HCL XII.2, p. 59; XIV.8, p. 79; XIX.5, p. 129.

⁶⁰ HCL XIV.8, p. 79; XXVIII.5, pp. 203–4.

⁶¹ HCL XIX.5, p. 129; XIX.6, p. 130.

⁶² HCL XVIII.9, p. 122.

on a political or diplomatic level. These speeches and dialogues are of course concerned with Christianity but they do not relate to the substance of the faith; rather, they constitute political or diplomatic exchanges concerning the acceptance or rejection of the new faith by the pagans, which was a decision that would either bring peace or a continuation of warfare. Thus where Christians figure as speakers, 14 cases illustrate occasions where Christian leaders formally call on pagans to accept the new religion, reproach apostates for their faithlessness, or set terms for allowing them to return to the Christian fold.⁶³ Some of these examples are fairly detailed in content. One such passage relates a purported dialogue between Bishop Albert of Riga and the representatives of Livish tribes from the region of the Aa who had risen up against Christian rule, making war on the Sword Brethren and reinstituting pagan practices such as animal sacrifices. Albert, the Sword Brethren and their loyal native auxiliaries marched against the apostates and besieged a fort belonging to the Livish leader Dobrel. After the Christians had succeeded in destroying most of the fort's defences, the Livs sued for peace. According to Henry, the negotiations between them and the bishop were phrased as follows:

The bishop said: 'If you will renounce the worship of false gods and will return whole-heartedly to the worship of the one God, if you will make fitting satisfaction to God and to us for your atrocious crimes, then we will restore the peace which you interrupted and we will receive you in the love of fraternal charity.'

But they said: 'What satisfaction do you require of us, Father?'

The bishop took the advice of the other bishop – of Ratzeburg – and of the dean of Halberstadt, who was present, and of the abbot and his provost and also of the master of the Brothers of the Militia and of his other prudent men.

He said to them in reply: 'Because you rejected the sacraments of the faith, because you disturbed the Brothers of the Militia, your lords, with war, because you wished to drag all of Livonia back into idolatry, and especially because, out of contempt of the most high God and in order to mock us and all Christians, you threw the goats and other animals which you had immolated to the pagan gods in our face and in the face of the whole army, we therefore demand a moderate sum of silver from your entire province, namely one hundred oseringi, or fifty silver

⁶³ HCL XI.6, p. 54; XIII.4, p. 71, XIV.11, pp. 84–5 (two instances); XVI.3, pp. 103–4; XVI.4, pp. 109–10 (two instances); XIX.8, p. 133 (two instances); XX.6, p. 138; XXI.5, pp. 144–5 (two instances); XXIII.3, p. 156; XXIII.7, pp. 160–61; XXIII.9, p. 167.

marks. You are furthermore obliged to restore to the Brothers of the Militia their horses and equipment and the other things which were taken from them.’⁶⁴

Henry’s representation of the bishop’s initial speech shows him starting off in rhetorical vein, offering the restoration of peace to the Livs in exchange for their renunciation of paganism, but in the second speech he has him becoming more precise in his message, specifying the terms of the *satisfactio*, that is, the restitution that the Livs will be obliged to carry out as a condition of being allowed back into the peace, namely a monetary fine and the restoration of property seized from the Sword Brethren. This episode thus contains a quite pragmatic message, which gives a credible and surely accurate representation of the actual peace terms that were communicated to the apostates. The effect of the passage is reinforced by a subsequent speech by the missionary Alabrand, who reproaches the Livs for their delay in fulfilling the bishop’s demands, and adds the condition that they should pay tithes to the Livonian Church.⁶⁵ Of a similar importance are cases involving negotiations with the Russian rulers of Polotsk (Belorussian Polatsk) and Gersike (Latv. Jersika).⁶⁶ So in cases of direct speech involving Christian speakers, there are a total of 17 examples relating to what we might call higher diplomacy with enemy parties among pagans, apostates or Orthodox Russians.

These speeches constitute some of the most significant representations of orality in the chronicle, and they indicate some important conclusions. First, they document milestones in the Baltic mission, in which the pagans are publicly offered the chance to accept Christianity. Their frequent refusal to do so and the rejection of peace that goes with it provides a justification for continued military

⁶⁴ HCL XVI.4, pp. 109–10; Brundage, p. 129: Et ait episcopus: ‘si renunciaveritis,’ inquit, ‘falsorum deorum cultibus et ex toto corde vestro ad unius Dei culturam reversi fueritis et satisfactionem dignam pro delictis vestris tam enormibus Deo et nobis impenderitis, tunc tandem pacem a vobis interruptam restaurabimus et vos in fraterne caritatis dilectionem recipiemus.’ At illi: ‘Quid,’ inquiunt, ‘a nobis, pater, satisfactionis requires?’ Episcopus vero requisito consilio alterius episcopi, Raceburgensis, et decani Halverstadensis, qui tunc aderat, et abbatis et prepositi sui nec non et magistri fratrum milicie et aliorum prudentum suorum respondit eis, dicens: ‘Pro eo, quod fidei sacramenta reiecitis et frares milicie, dominos vestros, bello inquietastis et totam Lyvoniam ad ydolatriam retrahere voluistis et maxime in contemptum Dei altissimi et ad nostram et omnium christianorum illusionem hircos et cetera animalia diis paganorum immolantes in faciem nostram et tocius exercitus proiecitis, ideo modicam summam argenti, centum videlicet oseringos vel quinquaginta marcas argenti, ab omni provincia vestra requirimus; insuper fratribus milicie equos.’

⁶⁵ HCL XVI.4, pp. 110–11.

⁶⁶ HCL X.4, p. 35; XIII.4, p. 71; XVIII.2, p. 115: et armatures suas et cetera eis ablata restituere tenemini.

action by the Christians. By contrast, it is a triumph for the Livonian mission when the Estonian defenders of Fellin in 1211 agree to end resistance and to accept the God of the Christians.⁶⁷ Similarly, in the very last instance of direct speech in the chronicle, the pagan Estonians of the island of Ösel demand to be baptized as a collectivity.⁶⁸ Cases of reproach to apostates also serve to document the dangers posed to the church of Livonia by such treachery. Second, the interest in spoken communication in the chronicle demonstrates Henry's own proximity to such events. I would argue that they provide evidence of his activity as *interpretes* of Bishop Albert of Riga, as they reflect occasions when it is likely that he was present at negotiations between the Christians and various native powers in Livonia, either acting as an interpreter himself or present in a capacity where he had access to communications at the highest level. We can confirm this implicit activity from some near-explicit evidence from the chronicle itself, such as on the occasion when Henry was sent, on behalf of Bishop Albert, to a meeting of Estonian ambassadors along with Bertold of Wenden, commander of the Sword Brethren. The most plausible explanation is that he was there to facilitate communication between the two sides.⁶⁹

Conclusions

We can attempt to integrate these findings about orality and communication with what is known about Henry's biography. According to the chronicle, in 1207 or 1208 Henry, newly promoted to holy orders, was sent to work in the region of Tholowa (Latv. Tālava) along with the priest Alabrand. Henry constructed a church and remained to work among the Letts there.⁷⁰ This church, which he received as a benefice, is generally assumed to have been in Papendorf, a place which was still associated with Henry many years later when he was an old man.⁷¹ If Henry was indeed as linguistically gifted as this study and other research has revealed, it would seem perverse that a man of his singular talents should have been restricted to the position of a parish priest only two or three

⁶⁷ HCL XIV.11, p. 85: 'Cognoscimus Deum vestrum maiorem diis nostriis, qui nos superando animum nostrum ad ipsius culturam inclinavit. Unde rogamus, ut parcendo nobis iugum christianitatis, sicut et Lyvonibus et Lettis, ita et nobis misericorditer imponatis'.

⁶⁸ HCL XXX.5, p. 220.

⁶⁹ HCL XII.6, pp. 61–2.

⁷⁰ HCL XI.7, p. 55: Alter vero constructa ecclesia et in beneficio recepta ibidem cum eis habitare et plurimis periculis expositus, future eis beatitudinem vite non desiit demonstrare.

⁷¹ Perlbach, 'Urkunden des rigaschen Capitel-Archives in der Fürstlich Czartoryskischen Bibliothek zu Krakau', pp. 20–23.

years after his arrival in Livonia. However, as the chronicle indicates, he was by no means confined to parochial duties. In 1220, as we have seen, Henry was sent to undertake missionary work in northern Estonia along with the Finn Peter Kakuwalde, although in this context he is still described as *Henricum Lettorum minister de Ymera*, indicating that he retained his position as parish priest in the region of Tholowa even while he was active in more distant areas.⁷²

The analysis of oral communication set out in this study suggests that Henry was active in numerous important diplomatic activities as an interpreter, especially in the course of the conquest of Estonia. It may therefore be likely that Henry was not relegated to the position of a humble parish priest after receiving holy orders, but rather that after his initial missionary activities there, the benefice of Papendorf was primarily meant to provide him with an income while he roved far and wide in the service of the Rigan church. This might well explain why his knowledge of Lettish was, surprisingly, less than that of the Finno-Ugric languages. There is a final pertinent piece of evidence which gives the last known testimony to Henry's career. This is a document from 1259 surviving in a transsumpt from 1336, in which Henry was recorded as having testified to the customary exercise of fishing rights that he had observed while he had occupied the parish of 'Sontakela'.⁷³ The precise identification of this place is problematic, since there is no medieval toponym that corresponds precisely to this form, but it is possible that the name was corrupted in the record of 1336.⁷⁴ The important

⁷² HCL XXIV.1, p. 169.

⁷³ Perlbach, 'Urkunden des rigaschen Capitel-Archives in der Fürstlich Czartoryskischen Bibliothek zu Krakau', pp. 20–23: Dominus Henricus plebanus de Papendorpe iuratus dixit, quod a tempore, quo sedit in parrochia Sontakela, vidit frequenter, quod Lyvones sine contradiccionē habuerunt terminos suos usque in fluvium, qui dicitur Orwaguge, in quo ipse cum Lyvonibus sepe piscepatur et traxit cum eis sportas murenularum.

⁷⁴ Arbusow and Bauer ('Einleitung', p. XIV) identify *Sontakela* with Sontagana, a toponym which occurs several times in the chronicle, although it is used in two different senses there. The *provincia, que Sontagana vocatur* is most frequently used to denote the first maritime province of Estonia reached from the south, that is, from the coastal areas inhabited by Livs (HCL XIV.10, p. 82; XVIII.5, p. 118; XXIX.7, p. 214). However, the name is also used in a more restricted sense to denote a fort known as the *castrum Sontagana* (HCL XIX.8, pp. 132–3; XXII.9, p. 153). The *castrum* was evidently the principal fortification of *Sontagana* province, and has generally been identified by Estonian archaeologists with the hillfort of Soontagana in Koonga parish, north-west of Pernau (Est. Pärnu), a well-defended site in the middle of marshland in western Estonia. See, for example, Heidi Luik, *Luu- ja sarvesemed Eesti arheoloogilises leiumaterjalis Viikingiajast keskajani* (Tartu, 2005) and Ain Mäesalu, 'Soontagana Stronghold: A Latest Iron Age Centre in Western Estonia', paper given at 'Hillforts and Power Centres East of the Baltic Sea in the 11th–13th Centuries, International Seminar Dedicated to the 80th Birth Anniversary of Evald Tõnisson', Tartu, 24–27 April 2008 (abstract). It seems probable that Henry's parish was located in the province

point is that when his testimony was recorded in 1259, Henry still occupied the parish of Papendorf, although the language of the document suggests that he was no longer in charge of *Sontakela* by this time. He may have been assigned to the parish of Papendorf soon after being ordained, then transferred to *Sontakela* in the course of the mission to the Estonians, and eventually brought back to Papendorf, where he ended his days. Yet it is equally plausible that he held the parish of Papendorf for the entire period, but also (at least for a certain period) enjoyed plural benefices in order to have access to the financial resources which were necessary to support his many diplomatic and missionary travels.

We may conclude that Henry was a gifted linguist who, in the course of his long career, acquired a working knowledge of the languages of Livonia. His ability to do this may well have derived from existing competence in a vernacular other than Low German, and his origins in an area of mixed German- and Slavic-speaking populations in north-eastern Germany meant that it is quite likely that he grew up with a working knowledge of Slavic. This skill marked him out as a candidate to become an interpreter using languages of the eastern Baltic region. Yet while his training may have started in Germany, probably at the monastery of Segeberg, he deepened his linguistic education as *scolaris* of Bishop Albert of Riga after his arrival in Livonia in 1205. The analysis of spoken language in the chronicle confirms the evidence of individual lexical items, namely that Henry's knowledge of the Livish and Estonian languages was greater than that of the Baltic tongues. Nevertheless, this point is indicative rather than conclusive, particularly since we do not know for certain how the process of translation functioned. The statistical analysis of spoken discourse would seem to suggest that Henry's knowledge of Russian was relatively slight. Yet if, as I have argued above, he already knew a West Slavic dialect in Germany, he may have been able to acquire some facility in Eastern Slavic after his arrival in Riga. This raises the possibility that Russian may have been used by Henry and other interpreters

of Sontagana, but this does not necessarily mean that he was based near the site of the hillfort. An alternative location would be the *castrum Sotecele* mentioned on a single occasion in the chronicle; this place was evidently in a Lettish-speaking area, since it is associated with the Lettish leader Russin; however, no conclusive identification for this site has been advanced, and there is no modern place name corresponding to it (HCL XII.6, p. 61, n. 4). We are therefore reliant on the evidence of the document from 1259. This indicates that Henry's activities enabled him to observe how the Livs came to fish in the river known as *Orwaguge*. This is clearly a Finno-Ugric hydronym incorporating the element *-jōgi*, 'river, stream', which is still preserved in the modern settlement name Orajõe (Ger. Orrenhof) in Häädemeeste parish north of the River Salis, near the village of Treimani (Ger. Dreimannsdorf) on the southernmost tip of coastal territory of modern Estonia. Although it may not be possible to locate the parish of *Sontakela* precisely, it would seem that it was situated in a border area where Henry was in regular contact with both Estonians and Livs.

as an intermediary stage in the process of translation between German and the native languages of the region. While his linguistic skills were undoubtedly used in the service of preaching, as described in the narrative of the chronicle, the representations of orality within the text indicate that as his experience and knowledge grew, Henry's talents as an interpreter increasingly came to be employed at the highest level of political activity of the Livonian church and its crusade against paganism.

Chapter 5

Martyrs and Miracles: Depicting Death in the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia

Marek Tamm

Introduction

There is no need to emphasize the importance of death in medieval culture.¹ From the very beginning, Christianity placed death at the centre of its value system.² Dying well became, if not an art, then at least a craft – an *ars moriendi*. In medieval times, the day of death was the day of birth – *dies natalis*; death meant rebirth into eternal life – or eternal damnation.³ Therefore, it is not surprising that death had a crucial role to play in medieval literature, especially in hagiography. But while the representations of death in saints' lives have been carefully studied,⁴ its role in historiography has not yet attracted very

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² For a good historical introduction, see Paul-Albert Février, 'La mort chrétienne', in *Segni e riti nella chiesa altomedievale occidentale*, 2 vols (Spoleto, 1987), vol. 1, pp. 881–942.

³ Since the 1970s, or more precisely since the publication of Philippe Ariès's important book *L'homme devant la mort* (Paris, 1977), death has become one of the most popular topics in medieval studies. For some recent synthesis, see Norbert Ohler, *Sterben und Tod im Mittelalter* (Munich and Zürich, 1990); Paul Binski, *Medieval Death: Ritual and Representation* (London, 1996); Danièle Alexandre-Bidon, *La mort au Moyen Âge (XIIIe–XVIIe siècle)* (Paris, 1998).

⁴ See, for instance, Henri Platelle, 'La mort précieuse. La mort des moines d'après quelques sources des Pays-Bas du Sud', *Revue Mabillon* 60 (1982), 151–74; Benedicta Ward, 'Laudabiliter vixit: The Death of the Saints in Some 12th-Century Sources', *Fairacres Chronicle* 17/1 (1984), 7–13, reprinted in her *Signs and Wonders: Saints, Miracles and Prayers from the 4th Century to the 14th* (Hampshire, 1992), ch. XXII; Jacques Dalarun, 'La mort des saints fondateurs: de Martin à François', in *Les fonctions des saints dans le monde occidental (IIIe–XIIIe siècle)* (Rome, 1991), pp. 193–215; Sophie Hasquenoph, 'La mort du moine au Moyen Âge', *Collectanea Cistercensia* 53 (1991), 215–32; Christian Krötzl, 'Evidentissime signa mortis: Zu Tod und Todesfeststellung in mittelalterlichen

much attention from medievalists.⁵

The medieval chronicler, like the medieval hagiographer, did not intend to offer realistic descriptions of dying, but rather to express certain ways of seeing death and thinking about it.⁶ Reading Henry's chronicle of Livonia could offer a glimpse of the poetics of death in medieval history writing. Henry is noticeably obsessed with death: it is difficult to find a page in the chronicle that does not contain a mortuary scene. In my view, death has a key rhetorical and ideological function in the chronicle's narrative. Although Henry borrows a lot from the earlier Christian 'grammar of the funerary theme',⁷ he nevertheless presents a quite distinct treatment of death and dying, an analysis of which helps to open up the ideological underpinnings of his chronicle. My intention, however, is not to offer a thorough analysis of Henry's representations of death. Instead, I shall bring into special focus the two extremes of dying in the chronicle: miraculous death and martyrdom.

Mirakelberichten', in *Symbole des Alltags: Alltag der Symbole. Festschrift für Harry Kühnel zum 65 Geburtstag*, ed. Gertrud Blaschitz et al. (Graz, 1992), pp. 765–75; Bernard Montagnes, 'Comment meurent les Prêcheurs méridionaux d'après les *Vitae Fratrum*', in *La mort et l'au-delà en France méridionale (XIIe–XVe siècle)* (Toulouse, 1998), pp. 41–64; Pierre-André Sigal, 'La mort des saints dans les *Vies* et les procès de canonisation du Midi de la France', in *La mort et l'au-delà en France méridionale*, pp. 17–40; Joachim Wollasch, 'Sterben und Tod im Leben des Abtes Petrus Venerabilis von Cluny', in *Vita Religiosa im Mittelalter. Festschrift für Kaspar Elm zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. Franz J. Felten and Nikolaus Jaspert (Berlin, 1999), pp. 87–122; Patrick Henriët, *La parole et la prière au Moyen Age. Le verbe efficace dans l'hagiographie monastique des XIe et XIIe siècles* (Brussels, 2000), pp. 289–378 (reprinting many of his earlier articles); Philippe George, 'Un moine est mort: sa vie commence. Anno 1048 obiit abbas Stabulensis', *Le Moyen Age* 107/3–4 (2002), 497–506; Michael Goodich, 'The Death of a Saint: A Hagiographical Topos', in *Hoping for Continuity: Childhood, Education and Death in Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, ed. Katariina Mustakkallio et al. (Rome, 2005), pp. 227–38; Ryszard Groń, 'Examples of "Good Death" in Ælred of Rievaulx', *Cistercian Studies Quarterly* 41/4 (2006), 421–41.

⁵ It is descriptions of the deaths of rulers, particularly in early medieval historiography, that have most attracted the scholars' attention; see, for instance, Stéphane Lebecqz, 'La mort des grands dans le premier Moyen Age', *Médiévales* 31 (1996), 7–11; Alain Dierkens, 'La mort, les funérailles et la tombe du roi Pépin le Bref (768)', *ibid.*, 37–51; Janet L. Nelson, 'La mort de Charles le Chauve', *ibid.*, 53–66; Guy Halsall, '"Nero and Herod": The Death of Chilperic and Gregory's Writings of History', in *The World of Gregory of Tours*, ed. Kathleen Mitchell and Ian Wood Brill (Leyden, 2002), pp. 337–50. See also Michael Evans, *The Death of Kings: Royal Deaths in Medieval England* (London and New York, 2003).

⁶ Michel Lauwers, 'La mort et le corps des saints. La scène de la mort dans les "Vitae" du haut Moyen Age', *Le Moyen Age* 94/1 (1988), 21–50 (here 32, n. 79).

⁷ This expression – 'grammaire de la topique funéraire' – is borrowed from Henriët, *La parole et la prière au Moyen Age*, p. 295.

Firstly, though, a brief typology of the ways of dying and of funerary rituals in Henry's chronicle seems to provide a necessary starting point.

Death and Ways of Dying

To begin with, we should take a look at how Henry conceives of death: on what occasions and how he speaks about it. In general, what made death interesting in the eyes of a medieval chronicler was the circumstances of dying. As the semiotician Yuri Lotman has aptly put it: '[w]hen a character dies in a modern novel, it is presumed that he need not have died but might have, say, married instead. The author of a medieval chronicle, however, works on the assumption that all people are mortal, therefore a mere record of death carries no information. But some die in glory, while others expire at home, in their beds – and that is what deserves mention.'⁸

As such, the medieval typology of dying was very simple. A contemporary of Henry's, the Cistercian monk and author Caesarius of Heisterbach (c. 1180–c. 1240), writes succinctly that there are just four ways of dying: to live well and to die well; to live badly and to die badly; and the remaining combinations of the two possibilities.⁹ This could serve as a starting point for us, too, in presenting the general typology of death scenes in Henry's chronicle. There are, indeed, two basic ways of dying according to Henry: a positive and a negative death. The good death, being reserved for Catholics, is well prepared for, peaceful or heroic, if not outright miraculous; the bad death, on the other hand, is allotted to pagans or schismatics; it is sudden, shameful or solitary.

An emblematic example of dying well, of a *mors preciosa*, is given by Henry through the case of Caupo (d. 1217), the converted Livish chieftain:

Caupo who had been run clear through by a lance, faithfully commemorating the Lord's passion, receiving the sacrament of the Lord's body, gave up the spirit in a sincere confession of the Christian religion, after he had first divided all his goods among the churches established in Livonia. Count Albert, the abbot, and all who were with them, mourned over him.¹⁰

⁸ Yuri Lotman, *Об укхыцмæ* (St Petersburg, 2005), p. 226.

⁹ Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus miraculorum*, XI.1, ed. Joseph Strange, *Caesarii Heisterbacensis ... Dialogus miraculorum*, 2 vols (Cologne, 1851), vol. 1, p. 266: 'Et quia de morientibus loqui proponimus, noveris quatuor esse genera hominum morientium. Quidam bene vivunt, et bene moriuntur; alii et male vivunt, et male moriuntur; alii male quidem vixerunt, sed Dei gratia bene moriuntur; et sunt qui quidem bene vixerunt, sed iusto Dei iudicio male moriuntur.'

¹⁰ HCL XXI.4, pp. 143–4; Brundage, p. 163.

Here we have all the necessary elements of an ideal Christian death, the 'tame death', as Philippe Ariès has called it:¹¹ the imitation of Christ, the last communion, the making of a will and collective mourning.¹² At the other extreme, we have a model of bad death exemplified by the Russian prince Vladimir of Polotsk (d. 1216). Invited by Estonians to come and lay siege to Riga with his army, he 'was about to enter his ship to go with [his army], all at once he fell down and expired, and died a sudden and unforeseen death'.¹³ For a medieval reader the message was clear: in a society where death was a kind of masterpiece, there cannot be anything more horrible than a 'sudden and unforeseen death', a *mors improvisa*.¹⁴

This general typology of depicting death in Henry's chronicle could certainly be further elaborated in greater detail. Among the bad deaths we could distinguish, for instance, decapitation and suicide. The slaying of pagans by Christians is not very noteworthy in Henry's eyes: their passing away is usually given in a few formulaic or stereotypic expressions. However, some death scenes of pagan leaders do deserve a somewhat more detailed description. What is most noticeable about these cases is that they all depict a decapitation. Such was, for instance, the destiny of Ako (d. 1206), 'the prince and leader' of the Livs of Holme (Latv. Mārtiņsala), who 'was killed and, together with the news of the victory, his severed head was sent to the bishop [Albert]'.¹⁵ More often, however, decapitation was a pagan initiative. This, for example, is how the Lithuanian Prince Suelgate (d. 1205) was killed:

¹¹ Ariès, *L'homme devant la mort*, chapter 1. See also his *Essais sur l'histoire de la mort en Occident du Moyen Âge à nos jours* (Paris, 1975), pp. 17–31.

¹² The anonymous *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* from the end of the thirteenth century pushes the comparison with the Passion of Christ even further, stating: 'er hatte vier wunden, / und sprach zû manchen stunden: / "vumf wunden got durch mich entpfien. / daz iz mir nicht als im irgienc, / des ist min clage nûwe." / er starb in gûter rûwe'. *Livländische Reimchronik*, lines 517–22, ed. Leo Meyer (Paderborn, 1876), p. 13; trans. Jerry C. Smith and William Urban, *The Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* (Bloomington, 1977), p. 8: 'He had four wounds and said repeatedly: "God received five wounds for me and I only regret that what befell Him has not befallen me." He died in peace.'

¹³ HCL XIX.10, p. 134; Brundage, p. 154.

¹⁴ This expression, 'died a sudden and unforeseen death' ('mortuus est morte subitanea et improvise'), is a loan from the Litany of saints in the Roman Breviary ('A subitanea et improvisa morte libera nos, domine'), see HCL, p. 134, n. 3.

¹⁵ HCL X.8, p. 38; Brundage, p. 59. Also Lembitu, chieftain of the Estonians of Saccalia (Est. Sakala), was first killed and then decapitated, his head afterwards brought back to Livonia. See HCL XXI.3, p. 143.

A certain member of the bishop's household, Theodoric Scilling, came upon Suelgate, who had said that he would overthrow the city of God, saw him sitting in a cart, and pierced his side with a lance. Certain of the Semgalls saw him shaking, cut off his head, and put it on one of their wagons.¹⁶

On another occasion Henry refers to this practice as something quite common among the natives: 'and when any of their men fell, wounded by the stones of the machines or by the ballistarii, immediately his brother or some other companion killed him by cutting off his head.'¹⁷

The worst imaginable death in the Middle Ages was suicide.¹⁸ Henry refers three times to this type of death, on each occasion in connection with pagan Lithuanians. First he relates the testimony of a priest named John, who had been held captive in Lithuania and reported thereafter 'that fifty women had hanged themselves because of the deaths of their husbands, without doubt because they believed that they would rejoin them immediately in the other life'.¹⁹ The second instance mentioned by Henry is that of the unfortunate Lithuanian Prince Dageruthe who was captured by the Sword Brethren. 'He was held there for many days,' Henry reports, 'until some of his friends from Lithuania could come to him. After that he stabbed himself with a sword.'²⁰ Finally he asserts that some Lithuanians who were not able to escape from Germans by crossing the River Dūna (Latv. Daugava, Est. Väina, Russ. Dvina) 'either drowned in the Dūna or hanged themselves in the woods'.²¹

Side by side with these negative examples, we can also distinguish the main types of good death, two of the most interesting of which are heroic death on the field of battle and martyrdom. Henry's notion of martyrdom will be examined a little later; here it is worth mentioning that his taste for depicting heroic death scenes is as avid as is his interest in martyrdoms. Take, for example, one of the episodes from a naval battle between the Estonians and the crusaders:

A certain German, a man of great strength and courage, leaping upon a third pirate ship holding his drawn sword with both hands and striking here and there,

¹⁶ HCL IX.4, p. 28; Brundage, p. 49.

¹⁷ HCL XIV.5, p. 77; Brundage, p. 98.

¹⁸ Alongside Jean-Claude Schmitt's ground-breaking article 'Le suicide au Moyen Age', *Annales ESC* 31/1 (1976), 3–28, Alexander Murray's study of medieval suicide, *Suicide in the Middle Ages*, 2 vols (Oxford, 1999–2000), should be mentioned as a work of primary importance.

¹⁹ HCL IX.5, p. 28; Brundage, p. 50.

²⁰ HCL XVII.3, p. 113; Brundage, p. 133.

²¹ HCL XXV.4, p. 184; Brundage, p. 203.

alone laid low twenty-two of the enemy. In this slaughter he labored beyond his strength. Therefore the sail was raised on high by the eight men who survived and, when wind filled the sails, this same man was taken captive and when the ships were brought together he was killed.²²

In his battle scenes, Henry likes to focus on some outstanding hero, often reporting his name, too. Whereas most of the heroes in Henry's narrative are German knights, we also have some interesting examples of native champions. For instance, he mentions 'a Lett, a certain Veko, who fought alone with nine Russians for a long time with his back to a tree. He was finally wounded from behind, fell, and died.'²³ Heroizing the killed neophytes is clearly a part of Henry's general rhetorical strategy of welcoming the converted natives into the camp of the crusaders.

Mortuary Rituals

An even clearer distinction between good and bad death emerges from Henry's descriptions of Christian as opposed to pagan burial customs. Anthropologists have taught us that while grief may be a universal emotion of bereavement, its social expression in mourning is culturally specific.²⁴ In general, the depiction of burial customs is one of the classic ways of drawing a line between 'oneself' and 'the Other'. As the French Hellenist François Hartog has put it: 'death is the sign of otherness' that helps us sort unfamiliar customs into concrete categories.²⁵

Since Christian burial represents, in Henry's eyes, 'normal' practice, he mentions it only in passing as, for instance, in the case of the Bishop Meinhard (r. 1186–96): 'The funeral was held according to custom.'²⁶ Or when, concerning the murdered master of the Livonian Sword Brethren, he briefly notes: 'they buried with great lamentation their faithful and pious master.'²⁷ On a few occasions, Henry also mentions the burial place, especially when the person being buried can be regarded as having died a holy death. Thus we learn that the

²² HCL VII.2, p. 20; Brundage, p. 43.

²³ HCL XXII.3, p. 150; Brundage, p. 169.

²⁴ See, for example, Antonius C.G.M. Robben, 'Death and Anthropology: An Introduction', in *Death, Mourning, and Burial: A Cross-Cultural Reader*, ed. Antonius C.G.M. Robben (Oxford, 2004), pp. 1–16 (here 7–9).

²⁵ François Hartog, *Le miroir d'Hérodote. Essai sur la représentation de l'autre*, 2nd edn (Paris, 2001), p. 229. See also Johannes Fabian, 'How Others Die: Reflections on the Anthropology of Death', in *Death, Mourning, and Burial*, pp. 49–61.

²⁶ HCL II.1, p. 8; Brundage, p. 31.

²⁷ HCL XII.2, p. 60; Brundage, p. 89.

two Livonian martyrs, Kyrian and Layan, were buried in the church of Üxküll, 'beside the tombs of the bishops Meinhard and Bertold'²⁸ – a choice of location strongly reminiscent of the ancient Christian tradition of burial *ad sanctos*.²⁹ Another martyr, the priest John, was buried, according to Henry, 'in the church of Blessed Mary at Riga'.³⁰ Even though Henry deems it unnecessary to present lengthy descriptions of Christian burials, they do have a distinct symbolic function in his view: Christian rituals of death play an important role in the Christianization of the conquered landscape and of local customs.

Much more attention is paid to pagan funeral customs, which the chronicler often depicts as the exact reverse of the Christian tradition.³¹ Characteristically, his pagans burn their dead and mourn them with heavy drinking. He sketches a brief outline of this ceremony when speaking about Estonians: 'but for many days they collected and cremated the pitiful bodies ... and held funerals, according to their custom, with much wailing and much drinking.'³² Describing later the apostasy of the Estonians, Henry also reports that 'they disinterred the bodies of their dead, who had been buried in cemeteries, and cremated them according to their original pagan custom.'³³ Even more interesting are Henry's claims about the Estonians having cremated not only their own, but also their adversaries' dead, Christians included: '[The Letts were] sad because of the deaths of their men, whom the Estonians had slaughtered and cremated.'³⁴ On another occasion, however, they are reproached for not having buried the Christian corpses: 'They left the bodies of the slain unburied on the plains. May their souls rest in peace with Christ.'³⁵

In addition to this, Henry is wont to imply that Christians have suffered an excruciating death in pagan sacrificial rituals. So, for instance, in the following passage: '[a] short time thereafter the pilgrims ... were attacked by Livs hiding in the woods. Seventeen of them were killed, some of whom suffering a cruel martyrdom were immolated to the pagan gods.'³⁶ Later, the Estonians are

²⁸ HCL X.6, p. 36; Brundage, p. 57.

²⁹ See Yvette Duval, *Auprès des saints corps et âme. L'inhumation 'ad sanctos' dans la chrétienté d'Orient et d'Occident du IIIe au VIIe siècle* (Paris, 1988).

³⁰ HCL X.7, p. 37; Brundage, p. 58.

³¹ On the medieval descriptions of funeral customs in the eastern Baltic region in general, see Marek Tamm, 'A New World into Old Words: Eastern Baltic Region and the Cultural Geography of Medieval Europe', in CCMBF, pp. 11–35.

³² HCL XII.6, p. 65; Brundage, pp. 86–7.

³³ HCL XXVI.8, p. 191; Brundage, p. 210.

³⁴ HCL XII.6, p. 65; Brundage, p. 86.

³⁵ HCL XXVI.7, p. 190; Brundage, p. 209.

³⁶ HCL IX.2, p. 26; Brundage, p. 52.

reproached for having made 'their pagan sacrifices' and 'many abominations around the churches and tombs of Christians'.³⁷

To conclude this short sketch of death rituals in Henry's chronicle, I would like to point to an interesting example of transitional burial customs, namely the funeral of Caupo. As we have seen, Caupo's death is depicted by Henry as a true model of an ideal Christian death. What is surprising, however, is the end of this death scene: 'His body was burned and the bones were taken away to Livonia and buried at Cubbesele.'³⁸ As noted by Torben Nielsen, Caupo's funeral displays obvious syncretistic features, with the application of both pagan and Christian burial rituals.³⁹

Miraculous Death

In order to elaborate my analysis of the representation of death in Henry's chronicle, I shall now address, as promised, the two types of uncommon death: miraculous death and martyrdoms.

Only a few miracles are described in Henry's chronicle – strictly speaking, no more than five.⁴⁰ Almost all of them, however, are connected to dying. The only exception is the miraculous healing of Bernard of Lippe's (c. 1140–1224) limbs after he had decided to join the crusaders' army en route to Livonia.⁴¹ The remaining four miracles serve to posthumously confirm the sanctity of a dead person. Their function in Henry's rhetorical and ideological strategies will receive some closer consideration in the conclusion; here, however, I shall focus on their intertextual nature. A medieval chronicler embellishing his narrative with miracles never went about this business entirely innocently

³⁷ HCL XIV.10, p. 83; Brundage, p. 104.

³⁸ HCL XXI.4, p. 144; Brundage, p. 163.

³⁹ Torben K. Nielsen, 'Mission and Submission: Societal Change in the Baltic in the Thirteenth Century', in *Medieval History Writing and Crusading Ideology*, ed. Tuomas M.S. Lehtonen and Kurt Villads Jensen (Helsinki, 2005), pp. 216–31 (here 227).

⁴⁰ HCL I.10, VII.6, XV.4, XIX.6, XXVI.10, pp. 5, 23, 92, 131, 191. Of course, one can find some other miraculous happenings in the chronicle, like, for instance, HCL XI.5, pp. 51–2; XIX.5, pp. 128–9. For a preliminary study of miracles in Henry's chronicle, see Marek Tamm, 'Les miracles en Livonie et en Estonie à l'époque de la christianisation (fin XIIème–début XIIIème siècles)', in *Quotidianum Estonicum: Aspects of Daily Life in Medieval Estonia*, ed. Jüri Kivimäe and Juhan Kreem (Krems, 1996), pp. 29–78.

⁴¹ HCL XV.4, p. 92; Brundage, p. 113. On Lippe's conversion and miraculous healing, see most recently Wolfgang Bender, 'Bernhard II. zur Lippe und die Mission in Livland', in *Lippe und Livland. Mittelalterliche Herrschaftsbildung im Zeichen der Rose*, ed. Jutta Prieur (Bielefeld, 2008), pp. 135–67 (here 148–51).

or independently.⁴² At a very early stage, medieval culture developed a rich tradition of miraculous stories which began to spread in both oral and literary form, and which in one way or another influenced all medieval authors.⁴³ Or, in Marcus Bull's recent happy phrasing: 'a writer setting about recording miracle stories would be locating himself in that tradition at least as much as he would be engaged in contemporary "reportage" of events known to him.'⁴⁴

At the beginning of his chronicle, Henry tells the story of a certain sick man in Treiden (Latv. Turaida), Livonia, who asked Bishop Theodoric (r. 1211–19) to baptize him. His many wives opposed this idea, but were later persuaded to agree. Only posthumously was it revealed how right the man's decision had been: 'When he died a certain convert saw his soul being carried into heaven by the angels and recognized him from a distance of seven miles.'⁴⁵

Henry uses here a very widely known Christian motif of a soul carried into heaven by angels.⁴⁶ It originates from the New Testament (Luke 16:22:

⁴² For general discussion on the function and tradition of miracle stories in medieval culture, see Benedicta Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind: Theory, Record and Event, 1000–1215* (Philadelphia, 1982); *Mirakel im Mittelalter. Konzeptionen, Erscheinungsformen, Deutungen*, ed. Martin Heinzelmann et al. (Stuttgart, 2002); Michael E. Goodich, *Miracles and Wonders: The Development of the Concept of Miracle, 1150–1350* (Aldershot, 2007). In medieval historiography, one interesting case in point is Bede's use of miracles in his *Ecclesiastical History*; see Bertram Colgrave, 'Bede's Miracle Stories', in *Bede: His Life, Times, and Writings*, ed. A. Hamilton Thompson (Oxford, 1935), pp. 201–29; Joel T. Rosenthal, 'Bede's Use of Miracles in "The Ecclesiastical History"', *Traditio* 31 (1975), 328–35; Benedicta Ward, 'Miracles and History: A Reconsideration of the Miracle Stories Used by Bede', in *Famulus Christi*, ed. Gerald Bonner (London, 1976), pp. 70–76, reprinted in her *Signs and Wonders*, ch. IX.

⁴³ For a discussion of the circulation of hagiographical motifs in medieval literature, see Baudouin de Gaiffier, 'Les thèmes hagiographiques. Est-il possible d'établir pour chacun d'eux une filiation?', *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 77/1–2 (1982), 78–81; Julia M.H. Smith, 'Oral and Written: Saints, Miracles and Relics in Britain, c. 850–1250', *Speculum* 65 (1990), 309–42.

⁴⁴ Marcus Bull, *The Miracles of Our Lady of Rocamadour: Analysis and Translation* (Woodbridge, 1999), p. 15. See also his important article 'Views of Muslims and of Jerusalem in Miracle Stories, c. 1000–c. 1200: Reflections on the Study of the First Crusaders' Motivations', in *The Experience of Crusading*, ed. Marcus Bull et al., 2 vols (Cambridge, 2003), vol. 1, pp. 13–38.

⁴⁵ HCL I.10, p. 5; Brundage, p. 28.

⁴⁶ See Pierre Boglioni, 'La scène de la mort dans les premières hagiographies latines', in *Le sentiment de la mort au Moyen Âge*, ed. Claude Sutto (Montreal, 1979), pp. 183–210 (here 196–200); Monique Alexandre, 'À propos du récit de la mort d'Antoine (Athanase, *Vie d'Antoine*. PG 26, 968–974, § 89–93). L'heure de la mort dans la littérature monastique', in *Le temps chrétien de la fin de l'Antiquité au Moyen Âge* (Paris, 1984), pp. 263–82 (here 266);

‘And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom’) and it is already widespread in the very first Christian hagiographical and liturgical texts. In its classical version, it was written down by Athanasius of Alexandria (d. 373) in his famous *Life of St Antony* (between 356 and 362). While sitting on the mountain and looking up into the air, Antony once noticed ‘some one being borne upwards, and there was much joy among those who met him. Then wondering and deeming a company of that kind to be blessed, he prayed to learn what this might be. And immediately a voice came to him: “This is the soul of Amun, the monk at Nitria.”’⁴⁷ This early Christian motif met with great success later on,⁴⁸ but Henry’s indirect source was in all likelihood Gregory the Great (r. 590–604). Pope Gregory relates twice in his *Dialogues* (593) how St Benedict ‘saw the soul of Germanus, bishop of Capua, in a fiery globe, carried up by Angels into heaven.’⁴⁹ The story was included almost verbatim in many medieval liturgical collections, like the martyrology of the monk Usuard and the Cistercian Breviary, which Henry may have known.⁵⁰ In his version one should notice that both the protagonist and the witness of the miracle are converted Livs.

William David McCready, *Signs of Sanctity: Miracles in the Thought of Gregory the Great* (Toronto, 1989), p. 130, n. 48.

⁴⁷ Athanasius, *Vita S. Antoni*, 60, ed. G.J.M. Bartelin, Athanase, *Vie d’Antoine* (Paris, 1994), trans. Henry Wace, *Athanasius: Select Works and Letters* (New York, 1892), p. 212.

⁴⁸ See, for instance, Rufinus, *Historia monachorum seu Liber de Vitis Patrum*, XVI, ed. in PL 31, col. 438: ‘Tempore autem aliquanto in his transacto, et ad scientiae perfectionem eo perducto, quem perfectum jam in operibus assumserat, quadam die Paphnutius sedens in cellula sua, vidit animam ejus inter Angelorum choro assumptum, dicentium: “Beatus qui elegisti et assemsisti: habitabit in tabernaculis tuis”. Et cum haec audisset, agnovit assumptum esse ex hoc mundo virum.’ Jerome, *Vita S. Pauli Primi eremitaie*, XIV, ed. in PL 23, col. 27: ‘Cumque jam dies alia illuxisset, et trium horarum spatio iter remaneret, vidit inter angelorum caternas, inter prophetarum et apostolorum choro, niveo candore Paulum fulgentem in sublime condescendere.’

⁴⁹ Gregory the Great, *Dialogi*, II, 35, ed. Adalbert de Vogüé, Grégoire le Grand, *Dialogues*, Tome II (Livre II) (Paris, 1978), p. 238: ‘... uidit Germani Capuani episcopi animam in spera ignea ab angelis in caelum ferri’; see also *Dialogi*, IV, 8, ed. Adalbert de Vogüé, Grégoire le Grand, *Dialogues*, Tome III (Livre IV) (Paris, 1980), p. 42: ‘... longe a Capuana urbe positus, Germani eiusdem urbis episcopi animam nocte media in globo igneo ad caelum ferri ab angelis asperxit.’

⁵⁰ Leonid Arbusow, ‘Das entlehnte Sprachgut in Heinrichs “Chronicon Livoniae”. Ein Beitrag zur Sprache mittelalterlicher Chronistik’, *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 8 (1951), 100–153 (here 132); Leonid Arbusow, *Liturgie und Geschichtsschreibung im Mittelalter* (Bonn, 1951), pp. 109–10, n. 91.

The next posthumous miracle happens in the parish of Holme, also in Livonia. When the local priest, a monk named Siegfried, passed away, his faithful parishioners, Henry says:

made a coffin for him out of good timber and found that one plank cut for the cover was a full foot too short. Disturbed, they sought for a long time and finally found a piece of wood to lengthen it. Fitting the piece to the above-mentioned plank, they tried to attach it with nails, but when they first placed it on the coffin they saw, as they gazed intensely, that the first plank, lengthened not by human but by divine skill had, according to their desires, been made to fit the coffin perfectly.⁵¹

As in the previous case, this motif of the miraculously lengthened beam or plank can also be traced back to early Christian times.⁵² In its typical version, it involves a scene in which a group of workers is charged with building a tower or bridge or some other kind of edifice; realizing, however, that a single beam has been cut too short, they are forced to abandon it. The problem is solved when, through a saint's intercession, the beam is miraculously lengthened. The first known version of this motif can be found in the *Infancy Gospel of Thomas*, an originally Greek or Syriac apocryphon from the second or third century that consists of a series of anecdotes about the young boy Jesus who manifests his divine powers at an early age by performing a number of miracles.⁵³ But its most popular medieval version was recorded by Gregory of Tours (c. 538–594) in his book *On the Glory of the Martyrs* (c. 585). The story goes that a church in Italy, dedicated to St Lawrence, had fallen into such a state of decay after years of neglect that its roof completely collapsed. The local residents prepared to repair it, travelling to a nearby forest, where they cut down oak trees, planed new beams and laid them side by side on the ground for alignment, only to discover that one of the beams had been cut too short. The bishop in charge of the project then raised a prayer to St Lawrence, and 'suddenly, to the surprise of all, the beam grew to such a

⁵¹ HCL VII.6, p. 23; Brundage, p. 44.

⁵² This hagiographical *topos* has been thoroughly studied first by Baudouin de Gaiffier, 'Le thème hagiographique de la poutre allongée', *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch* 17 (1982), 18–25, and then by Thomas N. Hall, 'The Miracle of the Lengthened Beam in Apocryphal and Hagiographic Tradition', in *Marvels, Monsters, and Miracles: Studies in the Medieval and Early Modern Imagination*, ed. Timothy S. Jones and David A. Sprunger (Kalamazoo, MI, 2002), pp. 109–39. In the following I am relying on their work.

⁵³ Hall, 'The Miracle of the Lengthened Beam in Apocryphal and Hagiographic Tradition', p. 115.

length that it was necessary for a long piece to be cut off'.⁵⁴ The story met with huge popularity in medieval literature and can be found independently in more than 15 different texts.

Thus, in most cases the beam is needed for some kind of edifice. The version Henry presents, however, can be linked to a special branch of this narrative motif in which it is not a beam, but a coffin or sarcophagus, that needs to be lengthened. The earliest version of this was popularized by the Venerable Bede (672/3–735) in his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (c. 731), in his account of the death and burial of King Sebba, the seventh-century king of the East Saxons:

They had prepared a stone sarcophagus for his burial, but when they came to lay his body in it, they found that it was longer than the sarcophagus by a hand's breadth. So they chipped the stone so far as they could, adding about two inches' space. But still it would not take the body. So in view of the difficulty of burying him they debated whether they should look for another coffin or by bending the knees shorten the body so that it would fit the coffin. But an amazing thing happened, certainly the work of heaven which made both of these alternatives unnecessary. Suddenly, as the bishop stood by, ... the sarcophagus was found to be of the right length to fit the body, so that a pillow could even be put in behind the head.⁵⁵

Henry's story thus seems to be a combination of two slightly different motifs: the lengthening of the beam and the stretching of the coffin. Both motifs are also found in some medieval hagiographical compendia and collections of *exempla*. Thus, it is not impossible that Henry may have been inspired by some such work. But it is still worth noting that in Henry's account, the witnesses of this miracle are local neophytes.

The third miracle takes place in Verona, in Italy. Reporting on the journey of the Livonian delegation to the Fourth Lateran Council in Rome, Henry gives a lengthy description of Bishop Philip of Ratzeburg's (r. 1204–15) last days. Philip died of an illness in Verona and was buried 'in a marble tomb that had once belonged to some cardinal, in a monastery of the Augustinian order

⁵⁴ Gregory of Tours, *In gloria martyrum*, no 41, ed. Br. Krusch, *Gregorii Turonensis Opera*, MGH Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum 1 (Hanover, 1885), p. 516, trans. Raymond van Dam, *Gregory of Tours: Glory of the Martyrs* (Liverpool, 1988), p. 64.

⁵⁵ Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica*, IV.11, ed. and trans. Bertram Colgrave and R.A.B. Mynors, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Oxford, 1969), pp. 367–9. For other similar stories, see Hall, 'The Miracle of the Lengthened Beam in Apocryphal and Hagiographic Tradition', pp. 132–6.

which is above a river'.⁵⁶ Henry continues: '[a] citizen of Verona saw in a vision a column gleaming like a flash of lightning, which came across the Alps and settled itself to rest there. Others testified that they had seen similar angelic visions at his tomb'.⁵⁷ Although the holiness of Philip had been made clear already by an earlier description, for Henry it seems to be necessary to confirm this opinion by a posthumous miracle which, once again, belongs in the classical repertoire of miracle literature. In the Middle Ages, miraculous light was regarded as one of the proofs of the sanctity of a buried person or of the authenticity of relics.⁵⁸ For instance, during the funeral of St William, the bishop of Bourges (d. 1031), a fireball is said to have been visible from both near and far.⁵⁹ The posthumous honours accorded to St Arnulf (d. 1087) consisted of a twinkling planet, visible in the heavens from the first to the sixth hour. It remained suspended above the saint's body, turning into an all-illuminating cross, the four arms of which shone against the sky in a golden glow.⁶⁰ A similar type of honour was also said to have been accorded to the grave of St Hildegard of Bingen (d. 1179). Above it, two arches of light intersected at their highest points, forming thereby a small cross which expanded to enormous proportions in the midst of rotating circles of multi-coloured light.⁶¹ The anonymous *Itinerarium peregrinorum* (c. 1220) relates how analogous divine treatment was bestowed on the brethren of the Military Orders who perished at the battle of Hattin in 1187: 'a ray of celestial light shone down clearly on the bodies of the holy martyrs during the

⁵⁶ HCL XIX.6, p. 131; Brundage, p. 151. As Barbara Bombi has recently ascertained, the only Augustine convent in Verona, in those days, was that of S. Giorgio in Braida: see Barbara Bombi, *Novella Plantatio Fidei. Missione e crociata nel nord Europa tra la fine del XII e i primi decenni del XIII secolo* (Rome, 2007), p. 249, n. 122.

⁵⁷ HCL XIX.6, p. 131; Brundage, p. 151.

⁵⁸ See G.J.C. Snock, *Medieval Piety from Relics to the Eucharist: A Process of Mutual Interaction* (Leiden, 1995), pp. 323–5. The following three examples come from this book.

⁵⁹ *Vita s. Guilielmi archiepiscopi Bituric*, X.36, ed. in *Acta Sanctorum*, 68 vols (Brussels and Antwerp, 1643–1940), vol. 1, col. 635 (10 ian.): 'quasi globus igneus in aere suspensus, supra sancti Protomartyris Stephani ecclesiam instar stellae coruscantis apparuit: quem non solum qui aderunt, sed etiam nonnulli aliunde ad nostram urbem properantes'.

⁶⁰ *Gloria posthuma s. Arnulfi confessoris*, no. 135, ed. in *Acta Sanctorum*, vol. 3, col. 258 (15 aug.): 'visa est in caelo sphaera ardens, quasi flamma ignis, quae incumberebat super sanctum corpus beati Viri ... signum sanctae Crucis, quae crux suo splendore vincebat omnem solis decorem ... per quattuor cornua ultra tendens et nimio fulgore velut aurum rutilans'.

⁶¹ *Vita s. Hildegardis virginis*, no. 58, ed. in *Acta Sanctorum*, vol. 5, col. 696 (17 sep.): 'In hac luce crux rutilans visa est, primum parva, sed crescendo postea immensa, circa quam innumerabiles varii coloris circuli'.

three following nights, while they were still lying unburied.⁶² Thus, according to Henry, Philip of Ratzeburg joined this glorious and enlightened company of medieval saints and martyrs.

The last posthumous miracle narrated by Henry is also the most interesting one. It deserves to be quoted in full length:

There was at that same time a Christian merchant in the house of an Estonian in Saccalia and when all the Germans in the land were being killed, this Estonian rushed upon his guest and murdered him. After this had happened, the wife of the murderer gave birth to a son. This son had upon his body fresh wounds in all the spots in which the father had wounded and slain the innocent man, and the wounds were similar in every way to the wounds of the murdered man. They later healed, and the scars appear to this day.⁶³

The logic behind the story is quite common in medieval accounts of punishment miracles.⁶⁴ Besides, it reflects a widespread belief in the medieval and early modern period that 'a woman before, during or after childbirth occupied a liminal space in which outer experiences were readily transmuted into inner experiences which affected both her and the child'.⁶⁵ An almost exact contemporary of Henry, the Welsh clergyman Gerald of Wales (c. 1146–c. 1223), chronicling on the opposite frontier of Christianity, gives a good example of this belief. 'It is a remarkable fact', Gerald writes in his *Journey Through Wales* (1191), 'that a

⁶² *Itinerarium peregrinorum*, I.5, ed. William Stubbs, *Itinerarium Peregrinorum et Gesta Regis Ricardi* (London, 1864), pp. 16–17, trans. Helen Nicholson, *Chronicle of the Third Crusade: The Itinerarium Peregrinorum et Gesta Regis Ricardi* (Aldershot, 2001), p. 34, quoted in Norman Housley, *Fighting for the Cross: Crusading to the Holy Land* (New Haven and London, 2008), p. 189. In a Cistercian exemplum collection, *Liber visionum et miraculorum*, from the 1170s, one finds the story of a girl in England who refused to marry and insisted on caring for the poor. After her death, light appeared above her tomb. See Troyes Bibliothèque Municipale MS 946, f. 6r, quoted in Brian Patrick McGuire, 'A Lost Clairvaux Exemplum Collection Found: The *Liber Visionum et Miraculorum* Compiled under Prior John of Clairvaux, 1171–1179', *Analecta Cisterciensia* 39/1 (1983), 26–62 (here 57).

⁶³ HCL XXVI.10, p. 191; Brundage, pp. 210–11.

⁶⁴ See, for instance, Pierre-André Sigal, 'Un aspect du culte des saints: le châtement divin au XIe et XIIe siècle d'après la littérature hagiographique du Midi de la France', in *La religion populaire en Languedoc du XIIIe à la moitié du XIVe siècle* (Toulouse, 1976), pp. 39–59; Edina Bozók, 'Les miracles de châtement au haut Moyen Age et à l'époque féodale', in *Violence et religion*, ed. Pierre Cazier and Jean-Marie Delmaire (Lille, 1998), pp. 151–68.

⁶⁵ Ulinka Rublack, 'Childbirth and the Female Body in Early Modern Germany', *Past and Present* 156 (1996), 84–110 (here 86).

fault in the parent should be handed down naturally to all its descendants'.⁶⁶ To confirm this fact, he relates some personal experiences. Thus, for example, he had once seen in England a knight called Erchembald whose father had refused to recognize him as his own son. Gerald continues, 'at the boy's birth nature settled the argument. As the result of a blow from a lance which he had received in battle, the father had a scar just below his nose in the middle of his upper lip. By some miracle of nature, when the child was born, he, too, had a scar in the same place.'⁶⁷

Thus, the miracle recorded by Henry again belongs in a specific mental tradition, but on this occasion I am not able to associate it with any particular written analogy. The authenticity, if I may use the term, of this miracle is also demonstrated by the fact that, independently of Henry, the same story is told by the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle*, which adds some new details.⁶⁸ Even more interesting, however, is the fact that according to the *Rhymed Chronicle*, the event was also recorded in a letter sent to Rome by William of Modena (c. 1184–1251), the pope's legate to Livonia.

Martyrdom

This latter miracle story constitutes a bridge to another type of death that I would like to examine a bit more closely, namely martyrdom. Henry is clearly fascinated by martyrs. He includes a total of 14 martyrdom scenes, many of them highly detailed. Henry's emphasis on the martyrs should, of course, be interpreted within the broader framework of the crusading ideology. The belief that crusaders could be – and often were – martyrs was, as we well know, firmly established with the launching of the First Crusade (1096–99). According to Guibert of Nogent (c. 1055–1124), Pope Urban II (r. 1088–99) had stated in his speech at Clermont, in 1095 that the new holy war 'contains the glorious reward of martyrdom'.⁶⁹ And Fulcher of Chartres (d. 1127) declares in the prologue to his *History of the Expedition to Jerusalem* (c. 1100–27): 'O, how

⁶⁶ Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Kambriae*, II.7, ed. James G. Dimock, *Giraldi Cambrensis opera*, vol. 6: 'Itinerarium Kambriae et Descriptio Kambriae' (London, 1868), trans. Lewis Thorpe, Gerald of Wales, *The Journey Through Wales and The Description of Wales* (London, 2004), pp. 190–91.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ *Livländische Reimchronik*, lines 1279–1332, pp. 30–31.

⁶⁹ Guibert of Nogent, *Gesta Dei per Francos*, II.4, ed., in *Recueil des historiens des croisades. Historiens occidentaux*, 15 vols (Paris, 1841–1906), vol. 4, p. 138: 'Nunc vobis bella proponimus quae in se habent gloriosum martyrii munus ...' Quoted in Shmuel Shepkaru,

many thousands of martyrs died a blessed death on this expedition!’⁷⁰ However, modern historians are not agreed on the exact course of the development and official character of the martyr cult in the crusades. While some authors, for instance, Jonathan Riley-Smith, hold that the martyr cult developed only during the First Crusade,⁷¹ others, like Jean Flori, think that the First Crusade merely gave the finishing touches to an existing earlier tradition.⁷² The debate over whether the martyr cult of the crusaders was officially sanctioned, or merely constituted the participants’ wishful thinking, has taken similar turns. Indeed, even though the chronicles of the crusades are filled with martyr deaths, the Catholic church is not known to have recognized any crusader as a martyr, nor to have included him in its liturgical calendar. While the first issue – that of the emergence of the veneration of martyrs – is not relevant for the purposes of the present chapter, since by the thirteenth century the veneration had certainly

‘To Die for God: Martyrs’ Heaven in Hebrew and Latin Crusade Narratives’, *Speculum* 77/2 (2002), 311–41 (here 315).

⁷⁰ Fulcher of Chartres, *Historia Hierosolymitana*, prologus, ed., in *Recueil des historiens des croisades. Historiens occidentaux*, vol. 3, p. 319: ‘O! quot millia martyrum in hac expeditione beata morte finierunt!’ Quoted in Karen Skovgaard-Petersen, *A Journey to the Promised Land: Crusading Theology in the ‘Historia de projectione Danorum in Hierosolymam’ (c. 1200)* (Copenhagen, 2001), p. 58.

⁷¹ Jonathan Riley-Smith, ‘Death on the First Crusade’, in *The End of Strife: Papers Selected from the Proceedings of the Colloquium of the Commission Internationale d’Histoire Ecclésiastique Comparée Held at the University of Durham 2 to 9 September 1981*, ed. David Loades (Edinburgh, 1984), pp. 14–31; *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading* (London, 1986), pp. 114–19; *The First Crusaders, 1095–1131* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 72–5.

⁷² Jean Flori, ‘Mort et martyre des guerriers vers 1100. L’exemple de la première croisade’, *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 34 (1991), 121–39; Flori, *La guerre sainte. La formation de l’idée de la croisade dans l’Occident chrétien* (Paris, 2001), pp. 334–43; Flori, ‘Pour une redéfinition de la croisade’, *Cahiers de la civilisation médiévale* 47 (2004), 329–50 (here 344–5); Flori, ‘Ideology and Motivations in the First Crusade’, in *Palgrave Advances in the Crusades*, ed. Helen Nicholson (Basingstoke and New York, 2005), pp. 15–36 (here 22–3). See also H.E.J. Cowdrey, ‘Martyrdom and the First Crusade’, in *Crusade and Settlement: Papers Read at the First Conference of the Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East and Presented to R.C. Smail*, ed. Peter W. Edbury (Cardiff, 1985), pp. 46–56; Cowdrey, ‘Pope Gregory VIII and Martyrdom’, in *Dei Gesta per Francos: Crusade Studies in Honour of Jean Richard*, ed. Michel Balard et al. (Aldershot, 2001), pp. 3–11; Colin Morris, ‘Martyrs and the Field of Battle Before and During the First Crusade’, in *Martyrs and Martyrologies: Papers Read at the 1992 Summer Meeting and the 1993 Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical Society*, ed. Diana Wood (Oxford, 1993), pp. 93–104; James Brundage, ‘Voluntary Martyrs and Canon Law: The Case of the First Crusaders’, *Cristianesimo nella storia* 27 (2006), 143–60 (here 145–6).

already taken on a distinct shape;⁷³ on the second issue I agree with Norman Housley's recent suggestion that 'when crusaders were described as martyrs the word was being used in a celebratory rather than a technical sense'.⁷⁴ This is, indeed, very logical, since it would have been technically very difficult to keep official count of all these thousands of martyrs who had fallen in those faraway regions. Besides, James Brundage has recently pointed out that canon law did not favour the crusaders' official recognition as martyrs either, since according to this law the person who consciously put his life at risk was in danger of committing the mortal sin of suicide, rather than fit to claim the martyr's palm.⁷⁵

Looking at the 14 martyrdom scenes in Henry's chronicle, we can observe that in almost every case he takes care to mention the victims by name, specifying also their social or professional status and ethnicity. There are three basic types of martyrs in the chronicle: clerics, crusaders and converts. Most of them are Germans, but a Swedish bishop is mentioned, too; and in three episodes, the champions are native neophytes. The most colourful of these scenes is the torturing of Thalibald (d. 1215), an elder of the Letts, by Estonians. It is noteworthy that, although he was not tortured for religious reasons but merely out of greed for money, Henry considers it likely that his sufferings earned him a martyr's palm:

They seized him and cruelly burned him, still alive, before a fire, threatening to kill him unless he would show them all of his money. He showed them fifty *oseringi*, but, nevertheless, they burned him. He said: 'If I were to show you all my money and all my sons' money, you would burn me nonetheless,' and he would show them no more. They put him again into the fire, therefore, and roasted him like a fish, until he gave up the spirit and died. Since he was a Christian and one of the number of faithful Letts, we hope that his soul is gladly rejoicing for such a martyrdom in eternal happiness in the company of the holy martyrs.⁷⁶

⁷³ See Caroline Smith, 'Martyrdom and Crusading in the Thirteenth Century: Remembering the Dead of Louis IX's *Crusades*', *Al-Masaq: Islam and the Medieval Mediterranean* 15/2 (2003), 189–96.

⁷⁴ Norman Housley, *Contesting the Crusades* (Malden, MA and Oxford, 2006), p. 41. See also his statement in his recent book *Fighting for the Cross*, p. 189: '[i]t looks like this [cult of martyrs – M.T.] was a grass-roots phenomenon. No attempt seems to have been made to have the names of dead crusaders officially inscribed among the Church's martyrs; indeed given the numbers involved that wasn't a viable proposition. What was indeed at stake was not formal acknowledgment of their status, but a collective mindset that insisted on the purity of those comrades who had died.'

⁷⁵ Brundage, 'Voluntary Martyrs and Canon Law', pp. 158–60.

⁷⁶ HCL XIX.3, pp. 124–5; Brundage, p. 144.

In most cases, Henry explicitly states whether a given death constituted martyrdom or not. What is interesting, however, is that he seems to divide the martyrs into two groups: those who had undoubtedly earned the martyr's palm (five in all), and those who were hoped to have gained it (six in all). For instance, reporting on the two Livonian converts, Kyrian and Layan, killed savagely by their compatriots, Henry states that 'there is no doubt that they received eternal life with the holy martyrs for such martyrdom.'⁷⁷ Or, in the case of a certain hermit killed by the Öselians: 'When his martyrdom had been consummated, he undoubtedly passed over happily into the communion of the saints.'⁷⁸ Yet on other occasions, his optimism is more reserved, as in the case of 14 Lettish warriors who were captured, tortured and killed by pagan Estonians, 'and thus, as we hope, sent into the heavenly company of the martyrs.'⁷⁹ Another indication of Henry's calculations in ascribing or merely suggesting the martyr's glory can be gleaned from his depiction of the late bishop of Estonia, Theodoric. Reporting very briefly his assassination by Estonians in 1219, Henry does not make any allusion to his martyrdom,⁸⁰ most probably because Theodoric had joined the camp of the Danish crusaders. However, a few sections later he comes back to Theodoric's last moments and writes in a quite different tone: '[Theodoric's] throat was slit in Reval by swords of the impious, so that, as we believe, he passed into the company of the martyrs.'⁸¹

Leonid Arbusow has emphasized the important influence of liturgical-martyrological literature on Henry's depiction of martyrdoms.⁸² Many of Henry's recurrent formulae are borrowed from the Roman Breviary, if not from the Bible, and they also can be found, as Wilis Bilkins has shown, in different medieval martyrologies.⁸³ Some of Henry's colourful scenes of martyrdom are reminiscent of the classic episodes familiar from early Christian hagiography.⁸⁴ Take, for instance, the cruel fate of the Cistercian priest Frederick of Selle (d. 1215) and his companions, captured by Öselians:

⁷⁷ HCL X.5, p. 36; Brundage, p. 57.

⁷⁸ HCL XXII.8, p. 151; Brundage, p. 171.

⁷⁹ HCL XIV.8, p. 80; Brundage, p. 102.

⁸⁰ HCL XXIII.2, p. 155.

⁸¹ HCL XXIII.11, p. 168; Brundage, p. 187.

⁸² Arbusow, 'Das entlehnte Sprachgut', pp. 123–4.

⁸³ Wilis Bilkins, *Die Spuren von Vulgata, Brevier und Missale in der Sprache von Heinrichs Chronikon Livoniae* (Riga, 1928), pp. 93–5.

⁸⁴ For the early Christian martyrdoms, see, for instance, William H.C. Frend, *Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church: A Study of a Conflict from Maccabees to Donatus* (Oxford, 1965); Arthur J. Droge and James D. Tabor, *A Noble Death: Suicide and Martyrdom among Christians and Jews in Antiquity* (New York, 1992), pp. 129–65; Marie-Françoise Baslez, *Les persécutions dans l'Antiquité. Victimes, héros, martyrs* (Paris, 2007).

Afterwards the Oeselians sharpening hard, dry wood, inserted it between the nails and the flesh and tormented every member with the points. They set the wood afire and tortured them cruelly. At last they killed them by hacking with their axes between their shoulders.⁸⁵

No less cruel is the agony of the magistrate of Jerwia (Ger. Jerwen, Est. Järvamaa), Hebbus, and his fellow Danes in the hands of Saccalians:

There they seized the magistrate, Hebbus, and brought him with the other Danes back to their fort and tormented him and the others with a cruel martyrdom. They tore out their viscera and plucked out Hebbus' heart from his bosom while he was still alive. They roasted it in the fire, divided it among themselves, and ate it, so that they would be made strong against the Christians. They gave the bodies of the Danes to the dogs to gnaw and to the birds of the air.⁸⁶

The violent imagery of Henry's chronicle was naturally not exceptional in its time. For example, Peter of les Vaux-de-Cernay (d. after 1218), who chronicled the Albigensian crusade taking place contemporaneously with Henry's Livonian crusade, describes a scene following the conquest of the castle of Bram by the crusaders:

As to the defenders of this place, more than hundred, they gouged out their eyes, and cut their noses, sparing one of them a single eye, so that as a mockery of our enemies, he will lead all the others to [the castle of] Cabaret.⁸⁷

The literature of the crusades breathed new life into the violent imagery of early Christianity; cruel scenes vividly represented unfold on the pages of the chronicles; yet this does not necessarily mean that European society itself had grown markedly crueller in the twelfth century. 'A Renaissance of cruelty' in the central Middle Ages, discussed by Daniel Baraz,⁸⁸ is first and foremost the renaissance of an ancient rhetoric of cruelty. Violent language is used by Henry not only in describing martyrdoms; it is characteristic of his bellicose chronicle

⁸⁵ HCL XVIII.8, p. 121; Brundage, p. 141.

⁸⁶ HCL XXVI.6, p. 190; Brundage, p. 209.

⁸⁷ Peter of les Vaux-de-Cernay, *Hystoria Albigensis*, 142, ed. Pascal Guébin and Ernest Lyon, *Petri Vallium Sarnaii monachi Hystoria albigensis*, 3 vols (Paris, 1926–39), vol. 1, p. 148. Quoted in Daniel Baraz, *Medieval Cruelty: Changing Perceptions, Late Antiquity to the Early Modern Period* (Ithaca, New York, 2003), p. 1. See also Hannele Klemettilä, *Keskiajan julmuus* (Jyväskylä, 2008), p. 44.

⁸⁸ Baraz, *Medieval Cruelty*, pp. 75–121.

in general. Thus, for example, with surprising frequency he lets blood flow in the name of common revenge: 'They [the Sword Brethren] beheaded all the men whom they had brought along as prisoners, in order to take vengeance upon those lying and unfaithful nations.'⁸⁹ Or, elsewhere, he has the groans of the dying drowned out by the Christians' jubilant shouts and music:

After all the men had been killed, there was great rejoicing among the Christians and they played upon the drums, pipes, and musical instruments because they had taken vengeance upon the malefactors and had killed all the traitors from Livonia and Estonia who had gathered there.⁹⁰

Conclusions: Henry's Poetics of Death

This brings me to the conclusion of my chapter, addressing in brief the function and significance of death for Henry's rhetorical and ideological strategies. It is quite clear that his representations of death are not casual but play an important role in the ideological structure of the chronicle. To put it concisely, one can point out two main functions of death in Henry's narrative. On the one hand, death is a major rhetorical tool used to depict the developing conversion process in Livonia and to distinguish the Christian camp from everybody else. The discursive structure of Henry's chronicle is characterized by a clear distinction of 'us' from 'the Other', even though the dynamics of the distinction need to be emphasized: those who had belonged among 'us' at the beginning may later become 'Others' (like the Danes, for instance), or the other way round (like the Livs).⁹¹ Scenes of good death or bad death serve as positive or negative examples

⁸⁹ HCL XXVI.13, p. 193; Brundage, p. 212. As Christopher Tyerman explains in Chapter 1 in this volume, vengeance is a crusade motif that reaches back to the First Crusade, and is implicit in certain biblical texts – such as Psalm 137: 'happy shall he be that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us' – put to good use by holy war advocates.

⁹⁰ HCL XXVIII.6, p. 205; Brundage, p. 226.

⁹¹ On the representation of the 'Other' in Henry's chronicle, see Linda Kaljundi, *Waiting for the Barbarians: The Imagery, Dynamics and Functions of the Other in Northern German Missionary Chronicles, 11th–Early 13th Centuries: The Gestae Hamaburgensis Ecclesiae Pontificum of Adam of Bremen, Chronica Slavorum of Helmold of Bosau, Chronica Slavorum of Arnold of Lübeck, and Chronicon Livoniae of Henry of Livonia* (unpublished MA dissertation, Tartu University, 2005); Kaljundi, 'Waiting for the Barbarians: Reconstruction of Otherness in the Saxon Missionary and Crusading Chronicles, 11th–13th Centuries', in *The Medieval Chronicle*, vol. 5, ed. Erik Kooper (Amsterdam and New York, 2008), pp. 113–27. In another context, Paul Freedman has also argued that the concept of the 'Other' is never static; see his 'The Medieval "Other": The Middle Ages as "Other"', in *Marvels*,

of behaviour, marking an ideological boundary between 'us' and 'them'. While most of the people on the pages of the chronicle pass away anonymously, the exemplary dead – heroes, martyrs, saintly persons – are recorded by name. So are the negative protagonists: the pagan chieftains or the Russian princes.

On the other hand, the representations of death, and particularly the attention paid to martyrdoms and to miraculous deaths, serve as an ideological justification of the crusading enterprise. As Christopher Tyerman has aptly put it, '[t]he sanctity of the crusade was reflected in attendant miracles and the belief that casualties were martyrs'.⁹² Numerous martyrdoms both exalt the Livonian crusade and offer a reason for armed defence of local Christians. Besides, the martyrs' blood sanctifies the newly Christian landscape, contributing towards its sacralization.⁹³ Special emphasis must be placed on the fact that the martyr's palm is not reserved exclusively for crusaders and clerics in the chronicle, but is accorded to local neophytes as well. Thus, Henry makes William of Modena praise the Letts who 'had gladly borne the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to the Esthonians and other peoples, and had sent many of their people, slain for the Christian faith, into the company of the martyrs as we believe'.⁹⁴

Unlike the martyrdoms, the narrative does not seem to require the support of numerous miracles, in Henry's view. This makes the macabre character of the miracles which are included all the more noteworthy. But the miracles, too, are clearly made to serve the author's ideological purposes, testifying to the divine nature of the crusade and confirming the right choices of the local converts, for whom Henry reserves the role of the principal witnesses of the miracles.

As I argued at the outset, Henry's narrative is to a great extent structured by death and dying. Henry is not embarrassed to depict constant killing; rather, he seems to take pride in the crusaders' cruelty, even though he also states that 'both the Livonians and Letts, who are more cruel than the other nations, like the servant in the gospel, did not know how to show mercy'.⁹⁵ I believe that the key to understanding Henry's poetics of death is to be found in his famous exaltation of the Virgin Mary in chapter 25 of the chronicle. This long eulogy can also be

Monsters, and Miracles: Studies in the Medieval and Early Modern Imaginations, ed. Timothy S. Jones and David A. Sprunger (Kalamazoo, MI, 2002), pp. 1–24.

⁹² Christopher Tyerman, *The Invention of the Crusades* (London, 1998), p. 10.

⁹³ On the importance of martyrdom for creating a Christian identity in early Christendom, see an inspiring study by Elisabeth A. Castelli, *Martyrdom and Memory: Early Christian Culture Making* (New York, 2004). See also the remarks made in the same vein by Philippe Buc, *Dangereux rituel. De l'histoire médiévale aux sciences sociales* (Paris, 2003), pp. 154–7.

⁹⁴ HCL XXIX.3, p. 209; Brundage, p. 232.

⁹⁵ HCL XVIII.5, p. 119; Brundage, p. 138.

read as a kind of litany of the dead, where Henry recalls all the most important scenes of 'bad death' described earlier, attributing all the glory – and ascribing all the responsibility – for them to the holy Mother of God. That fascinating litany is too long to be quoted in full, so I would like to select just one eloquent passage from it:

Did She not kill Svelgate and many other princes and elders of the Letts through her Livonian servants? Did She not cause Ako, once the prince of the treacherous Letts at Holm, and many others, to fall dead at the hands of the Rigans? Did She not lay to rest Russin, the elder of the Letts in the fort of Dobrel? Did not all the elders of Treiden, who were called traitors, fall and die in the time of the pestilence? Did not all the elders of Oesel as well as of the provinces of Rotalia fall dead before the Rigans at Treiden? Did not Lembit, Vytames, and their other treacherous elders in Saccalia fall dead before the Rigans? And all those who remained and persisted in their treachery – did they not all perish?⁹⁶

This long quotation leads me to the final and concluding point I want to make in this chapter: death is very much one of the ideological and rhetorical backbones of Henry's chronicle, all the major themes of which seem to converge in the *topos* of death. Using the happy expression of the French literary theorist Michel Picard, 'when you speak about death, you always speak about something else'.⁹⁷

⁹⁶ HCL XXV.2, p. 180; Brundage, p. 199.

⁹⁷ Michel Picard, *La littérature et la mort* (Paris, 1995), p. 60.

Chapter 6

Henry of Livonia on Woods and Wilderness

Torben Kjersgaard Nielsen

Introduction

In an article originally titled ‘Le désert-fôret dans l’Occident médiéval’, and later translated into ‘The Wilderness in the Medieval West’ and published in his *The Medieval Imagination*, the French medievalist Jacques Le Goff investigated several notions of wilderness in the medieval West, drawing on a wide range of sources from the Bible and the Church Fathers, from early medieval writers such as the Irish monks, and from writers and scholars from the central Middle Ages, such as the vast hagiographic literature, while also touching briefly on the nascent vernaculars of the medieval West. To Le Goff, the different kinds of wildernesses he explored in his article in fact share some common features, which could be summarized into what almost amounts to a general perception of Le Goff’s of landscape and society in the Middle Ages:

In the Middle Ages the contrast was not, as it had been in antiquity, between the city and the country (urbs and rus, as the Romans put it) but between nature and culture, expressed in terms of the opposition between what was built, cultivated, and inhabited (city, castle, village) and what was essentially wild (the ocean and forest, the western equivalents of the eastern desert), that is, between men who lived in groups and those who lived in solitude.¹

Explicitly operating within oppositions as it does, the quote of course displays some explicit dichotomies: between nature and culture; between cultivated and wild; between society and solitude. However, Le Goff – true to his analytic approach and with an evident debt to the structuralist tradition of the famed anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss – obviously considers these categories

¹ Jacques Le Goff, ‘The Wilderness in the Medieval West’, in his *The Medieval Imagination* (Chicago, 1992), pp. 47–59 (here 58).

themselves as analytical tools (and as such to have been in play in the minds of both modern and medieval men) rather than attempts at an actual description of a reality in the world presenting itself to men.

From another angle of cultural criticism, but still – at least partly – influenced by Lévi-Strauss, the American philosopher Hayden White has also considered conceptions of wildness. Hayden White traces the processes by which concepts like ‘the wild man’ have changed from myth to fiction and to myth again in European thought. White, rather than opting for an essentialist and steadfast character in the concept of wilderness, argues that the concept in fact has been subject to radical change over time. The concept of wilderness was widely used as an *anthropological* category in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, only to develop into an equally widely used *psychological* category in recent times. The use of it as an anthropological category would suggest that it represented some sort of presocial or supersocial state, that is, a particular phase in the histories of human societies moving evolutionarily and determinedly *out* of wilderness *into* civilization. The fundamental *dynamism* and changeability of the concept of wilderness is for White proved by the fact that wilderness in popular modern usage has changed into a term designating not societies but people, who for ‘psychological or purely physical reasons, are unable to participate in the life of *any* society, whether primitive or civilized’. Wilderness, then, in modern times seems, in White’s words, to become conflated with the popular notion of psychosis, a sickness reflecting a personality malfunction in this individual’s relation to society.² White claims that:

The notion of ‘wildness’ (or, in its Latinate form, ‘savagery’) belongs to a set of culturally self-authenticating devices which includes, among many others, the ideas of ‘madness’ and ‘heresy’ as well. These terms are used not merely to designate a specific condition or state of being but also to confirm the value of their dialectical antitheses ‘civilization,’ ‘sanity,’ and ‘orthodoxy,’ respectively. Thus, they do not so much refer to a specific thing, place, or condition as dictate a particular attitude governing a relationship between a lived reality and some area of problematical existence that cannot be accommodated easily to conventional conceptions of the normal and the familiar.³

It is in this line of thought that I would like to investigate the notions of woods and wildernesses in Henry of Livonia’s thought. Wilderness is not a given thing, but rather it takes on meaning exactly by the conceptualizations made

² Hayden White, ‘The Forms of Wildness: The Archaeology of an Idea’, in his *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism* (Baltimore, 1992), pp. 150–82.

³ White, ‘The Forms of Wildness’, p. 151.

by the persons considering – in more or less explicit ways – ‘wildernesses’ in their own cultural ‘environment’. Even if the arguments put forward by White are concerned with the modern usage of the concept, I find it justified to use his observations as a point of departure. In doing this I consider myself in line with the ideas and considerations put forward by the historian Volker Scior. In his work on medieval chroniclers and their conceptualizations of identity and ‘otherness’, Scior is particularly interested in medieval concepts of space and place in the medieval chroniclers, and he discusses the scientific results reached by the school of so-called ‘cognitive cartography’. In opposition to older theoretical views on space and place, Scior relates:

it has been shown in works which theoretically and methodologically appeal to approaches from cognitive cartography, that space must not be understood as something objective or neutral. Rather, it has been convincingly argued that in principle space is always structured as a cognitive space and always dependable – albeit, quite differently so – on individual assessments of the phenomena which are in it and the evaluations made hereof.⁴

What follows from these observations is that ‘the concept of wilderness’ in Henry of Livonia is not a fixed one, to which we simply can refer. His conceptualizations must be seen as a mixture of ideas, sentiments and thoughts in Henry himself, brought home to him by his readings of written material, of which we know only very little, and of unknown personal relations in his own biography.

What we do know, and what will hopefully become clear in the following, is that the man with whom we are concerned, the Christian chronicler Henry of Livonia, over time designated his conceptualization of the woods and the wildernesses, not by conversations in the safe havens of a civilized refectory in a monastery or by the scholarly distance inherent in the lecture rooms of the emerging universities in Western Europe of his time; on the contrary, Henry’s possible conceptions of woods and wilderness were confronted with – and thus also formed by – his own bodily encounters with the actual landscapes of the Baltic. As such, his conceptions should not be called analytical, but rather, in a way, sensuous. It is my contention that Henry experienced the landscape of the Baltic in a specific historical setting – the Christianization of the Baltic – and that exactly this particular context and the events produced by and in it would have a marked influence on his – often, however, implicit – conceptualizations of woods and wilderness.

⁴ Volker Scior, *Das Eigene und das Fremde. Identität und fremdheit in den Chroniken Adams von Bremen, Helmolds von Bosau und Arnolds von Lübeck* (Berlin, 2002), p. 22.

While there is often room for criticism in Le Goff's eclectic work, his scholarship is always powerfully thought-provoking. Upon reading Le Goff, I wondered how notions of wilderness were displayed in the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia. Obviously, what the landscapes investigated in the above-mentioned work by Le Goff had in common was the fact that they were all thoroughly *Christian*. Hence the 'wildernesses' acknowledged and investigated by Le Goff are often the wildernesses experienced by a Christian anchorite's search for God in his self-sought solitude,⁵ or wildernesses alluded to and the fear instigated by a chance appearance of the occasional wild man in the (imagined) forests of Christian Western Europe.⁶ These are not the kinds of wildernesses experienced by Henry of Livonia. He does not encounter Christian hermits living in the wilds in the Baltic, and, as I hope to show in this chapter, whatever unease and anxiety about the wilderness he experiences in the Baltic comes across as something quite different from imaginations of wild men or monsters of and in nature.

One obvious difference between the landscapes investigated by Le Goff and the Baltic landscapes encountered by Henry is, of course, that from the outset of Henry's narrative, the Baltic landscapes were *not* Christian landscapes, although most of them ended up being just that over the period covered by his chronicle.⁷ The making of a Christian landscape is a huge topic, and I have investigated parts of Henry's chronicle elsewhere in this respect, arguing that the process of 'Christianization', 'Europeanization' or whatever other term is used, was not just a question of overcoming the pagan societies of the Baltic

⁵ Le Goff, 'The Wilderness', esp. pp. 48–51.

⁶ In another article, Le Goff analyses the story by Chretien de Troyes: *Yvain ou le Chevalier de Lion* (from c. 1180), in which the protagonist, fleeing to the woods from the court of King Arthur, encounters a 'wild man' in the forest and is shocked by this man's beastly appearance: 'His head was larger than that of a horse or any other animal, and he had bushy hair, a broad, hairless forehead more than two hands wide, large, soft ears like those of an elephant, enormous brows, a flat face, owl's eyes, a cat's nose, a cleft mouth like a wolf's, sharp, reddish teeth like a boar's, a black beard, a curly moustache; his chin touched his chest, and his backbone was long, hump-backed, and twisted. He leaned on a club and was clad in a strange outfit that was made not of linen or wool but of two pieces of cowhide attached to his neck.' Jacques Le Goff and Pierre Vidal-Naquet, 'Lévi-Strauss in Broceliande: A Brief Analysis of a Courtly Romance', in Le Goff, *The Medieval Imagination*, pp. 107–31 (here 120). See also Richard Bernheimer, *Wild Men in the Middle Ages: A Study in Art, Sentiment, and Demonology* (New York, 1979).

⁷ A work which surveys this process is Eric Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades: The Baltic and the Catholic Frontier 1100–1525* (London, 1980). See also Tiina Kala, 'The Incorporation of the Northern Baltic Lands into the Western Christian World', in CCBF, pp. 3–20.

in war, but also – or, in fact, rather – a prolonged process with implications also for very basic conceptions like the sacrality of physical landscapes and man-made structures (churches and chapels), as well as the whole ‘cultural landscape’ in people’s minds.⁸

Thus, my expectation – when venturing into reading Henry again in search for his ‘concepts of wildernesses,’ and having read Le Goff and the literature I used to consider the making of a new cultural landscape in the Baltic – was that Henry would possibly stage the wilderness of the Baltic landscapes through terms and in ways that would underline the fundamental ‘Otherness’ of this non-Christian, Baltic landscape. Despite the considerable time-gap, but considering the well-known Roman influence on medieval literature, I assumed that Henry might consider the forests and swamps of the Baltic ‘horrible’ and ‘foul’ – as, for instance, Tacitus did an ‘Other’ landscape in his *Germania*.⁹ After all, remembering modern anthropology and geography, landscapes are also – and maybe most of all – mindscapes,¹⁰ and landscapes thus cannot simply be rendered ‘objectively’ or ‘as they are’. A landscape will always be a construction in the mind of the person doing the rendering.¹¹ It was my thought that parts of the ‘mindcape’ of Henry, then, in a sense would be readable through his conceptualizations of landscape.

However, I quickly had to realize that Henry in fact does not bother himself directly with landscape or even geography. His chronicle does not contain a specific chapter or entry on how the particular regions of the Baltic look and what the characteristics of nature there are, let alone a discussion

⁸ Torben Kjersgaard Nielsen, ‘The Making of New Cultural Landscapes in the Thirteenth Century Baltic’ (forthcoming). See also Carsten Selch Jensen, ‘How to Convert a Landscape: Henry of Livonia and the *Chronicon Livoniae*’, in CCMBF, pp. 151–68; Kurt Villads Jensen, ‘Crusading and Christian Penetration into the Landscape: The New Jerusalem in the Desert’, in *Sacralisation of Landscape*, ed. Stefan Brink and Sæbjørg Walaker Heide (forthcoming).

⁹ Tacitus, *Germany – Germania: With an Introduction, Translation and Commentary*, trans. Herbert W. Benario (Warminster, 1999). See Tacitus, *Germany* I.A.5, pp. 18–19: ‘*silvis horrida*’, ‘*paludibus foeda*’. The internet article from Wikipedia, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enchanted_forest>, is in itself a living proof of the continuing fascination vested in the theme of ‘wild’ forests. The site offers further examples from especially European literature and folklore.

¹⁰ See R.J. Zwi Werblowsky, ‘Introduction: Mindscape and Landscape’, in *Sacred Space: Shrine, City, Land*, ed. Benjamin Z. Kedar and R.J. Zwi Werblowsky (New York, 1998), pp. 9–17. Werblowsky attributes the phrase to Allan Grapard, who works on Japanese religious history.

¹¹ Cf. Barbara Bender, ‘Introduction’, in *Landscape: Politics and Perspectives*, ed. Barbara Bender (Oxford, 1993), pp. 1–17.

of wilderness and civilization. In his fairly everyday language, he seems not to be interested in either geographical (in contrast to, for instance, Adam of Bremen [d. 1081/85] before him)¹² or anthropological categories (in contrast to, for instance, a writer like Gerald of Wales [c. 1146–1223]).¹³ Henry does not strike his reader as being overly prone to symbolic or other interpretations of the world around him. He does, however, in fact include in his chronicle one very exciting chapter (XXV.2) in which he makes a symbolic interpretation of Livonia as the Land of the Mother. And his conceptualization of the city of Riga as the place from where the whole region is fruitfully irrigated with Christianity, punning of course on the name of the city and the Latin word *rigo/irrigare*, stand out among the few symbolic interpretations of landscape in his chronicle.¹⁴ However, I shall not deal with these two examples in this chapter. I shall deal only with the woods of the Baltic as these are depicted in Henry's chronicle. Through this, hopefully, Henry's innate conceptions of 'wilderness' will also be brought to light.

¹² Adam of Bremen, *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*, ed. Bernhard Schmeidler, MGH rer. Germ. in usum scholarum separatim editi 2 (Hanover and Leipzig, 1917). The part of his work of interest here is the so-called 'Descriptio insularum Aquilonis' in the fourth book of his chronicle, which describes the northern lands and the islands of the northern seas. The work exists in an English translation: Adam of Bremen, *History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen*, trans. F.J. Tschan (New York, 2002).

¹³ Cf., for example, his *Expugnatio Hibernica*, ed. A.B. Scott and F.X. Martin (Dublin, 1978). His *Topographia Hibernica* is translated as *The Topography of Ireland* by J.J. O'Meara (Dundalk, 1951). His *Itinerarium Kambriae* and his *Descriptio Kambriae* are translated as *The Journey through Wales/The Description of Wales* by Lynn Thorpe (Harmondsworth, 1978). A biographical study is provided by Robert Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales 1146–1223* (Oxford, 1982).

¹⁴ HCL XXV, pp. 268–73; Brundage, pp. 197–200. See, for example, the treatment of this chapter in Henry by Linda Kaljundi, 'Young Church in God's New Vineyard: The Motifs of Growth and Fertility in Henry's Chronicle of Livonia', *Ennen ja Nyt* 4 (2004), online at <<http://ennenjanyt.net/4-04/referee/kaljundi.html>>. Leonid Arbusow, *Colores Rhetorici. Eine Auswahl rhetorischer Figuren und Gemeinplätze als Hilfsmittel für akademische Übungen an mittelalterlichen Texten* (Göttingen, 1948), pp. 38–9 has also noted the use of another pun on Riga/*rigo* in Henry's chronicle (HCL XXX.5, p. 220) with the aid of a literary half verse, which Arbusow believes Henry to have taken from a medieval poem, 'Tobiah', by Matthieu de Vendôme. Originally the phrase used stems from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 11, l.419. See also Leonid Arbusow, 'Das entlehnte Sprachgut in Heinrichs "Chronicon Livoniae". Ein Beitrag zur Sprache mittelalterlicher Chronistik', *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 8 (1951), 100–153 (here 106).

Hiding in the Forest

The woods and forests in Henry's chronicle are most often presented as containing 'hiding places' for the indigenous – *latibula silvarum*. Henry only seldom designates these *latibula* any further. At the most, these hiding places appear to Henry to be dark or gloomy (*tenebrosa*) or he states that they are simply placed in particularly dense parts of the forests.¹⁵ This, of course, is not especially revealing. However, the *contexts* of the references to hiding places in Henry's chronicle seem slightly more promising for my investigation. We learn in Henry's chronicle that the forests contain hiding places for the Baltic peoples when they are threatened by either German missionary forces or by neighbouring tribes on the rampage. These *latibula* appear to be established as carefully selected places of refuge. It is as if almost every village would have known one or several of these places in the woods, the location of which were very well known to the locals.¹⁶ Henry relates that, following the 1224 German conquest of the city of Dorpat (Est. Tartu), the locals would now come out of the hiding places in the forests in which they had hid themselves for several years in times of war. Following the German restoration of peace, as we are led to think, every man returned to his village and his fields.¹⁷

Sometimes this would simply be the end of it: in times of war, the locals would flee to their *latibulis silvarum* and leave the village to be pillaged by the attacking enemy. When the enemy had left, the village people would again appear from their hiding places to consider the damage to land and property. In this sense, the hiding places seem to have served a purpose very well known in much medieval literature of Henry's time: the forest would be a place of refuge, an intermediate safe haven, that would serve to save lives.¹⁸

¹⁵ Cf. HCL XI.9, p. 58: '... silvarum tenebrosa querunt latibula ...'; and HCL IX.11, p. 31: '... nemore densissimo ...'. Arbusow, 'Das entlehnte Sprachgut', p. 105, n. 2, considers phrases like these to be the result of oral teaching of Latin grammar, since these expressions are to be found in diverse *florilegia* of the time.

¹⁶ Cf. HCL XV.1, p. 88 and XIX.3, p. 126, to cite just a few.

¹⁷ HCL XXIX.1, p. 207.

¹⁸ Of course, medieval literature in general is very fond of using dense forests as typical loci for hiding places or places of refuge. An example is provided by the popular story of Tristan and Yseult, in which the two protagonists take to the forests once their adulterous romance has become known. See also the many versions available of Eilhardt von Oberg, Beroul, Thomas of Britain and the Prose Tristan. Also, for example, Bodo Mergell, *Tristan und Isolde. Ursprung und Entwicklung der Tristansage des Mittelalters* (Mainz, 1949). Beroul's *Tristan* is commented on by Le Goff, 'The Wilderness', pp. 55–6. Further, Jacques Le Goff and Pierre Vidal-Naquet, 'Lévi-Strauss in Broceliande', offer a structural (Lévi-Straussian) analysis of Chrétien de Troyes' story *Yvan ou le Chevalier de Lion* from c. 1180. In this

However, in Henry's judgement, these *latibula* actually most often did *not* serve this purpose of offering a place of protection, regardless of what the locals themselves hoped for by seeking the shelter of the forests. We often read that the refugees are brutally hunted and eventually simply dragged out of their hiding places in the woods. The men would then be brutally killed, the women dragged away together with the livestock and children.¹⁹ At other times, we learn that the refugees themselves have to leave their hiding places in order to collect food and other necessities from the villages – only to be captured or killed when they appear in the open or return to their villages prematurely. This is the case, for example, in Henry's story of the Lett convert, Thalibald, whom we learn was killed in 1215 by the Saccalians and Ugaunians of Estonia. Forced to flee from German troops, they accidentally come across Thalibald. They seize him on his return 'from the hiding places of the forests for a bath' and they burn him alive before a fire, because, as we are told, he would not give up his money.²⁰ In yet other instances we are told that the people hiding in the forests actually perished from hunger, thirst and cold:

On the following day and the third day, they went out and took horses and innumerable flocks; for of the latter there were four thousand oxen and cows, not counting horses, other flocks, and captives, of whom there was no count. Many of the pagans, however, who escaped through flight to the forests and the ice of the sea, perished in the freezing cold.²¹

story, the protagonist flees the court of King Arthur to take refuge in a forest. His stay in the forest is shown to have lasting effects on the once noble knight, in that the forest almost turns him into a 'naked savage', only to be re-integrated slowly into civilized society when Yvain encounters a hermit, the character of which obviously plays a mediating role between civilization and sylvan savagery, personified by the other creature encountered by Yvain, namely the wild man from the woods, see footnote 6 above. The folk stories of Robin Hood of Sherwood Forest are, of course, considerably later, but the stories do contain references to rhymes from at least the fourteenth century. Cf. Barrie Dobson and John Taylor, *The Rymes of Robin Hood: An Introduction to the English Outlaw* (Sutton, 1997).

¹⁹ Cf. HCL XV.7, p. 97.

²⁰ HCL XIX.3, p. 125; Brundage, p. 144.

²¹ HCL XIV.10, p. 82; Brundage, p. 103. See also HCL XV.3, p. 91; Brundage, p. 112: 'The Estonians, however, fled by night in their pirate ships and wished to go down to the sea, but the ballistarii on both sides of the Aa hindered their descent. Other pilgrims came with Bernard of Lippe to the Aa from Riga. They made a bridge over the river, built wooden structures upon the bridge, caught the pirate ships as they came with arrows and lances, and completely cut off the pagans' escape route. In the still quiet of the night, therefore, the Estonians secretly disembarked from their pirate vessels, leaving all their things behind, and fled. Some of them perished in the forests and others yet died of hunger on the road; only a few of them escaped to their own land to announce the news at home.'

The forests simply did not work as protection. Referring to 1209, Henry relates, almost as a general statement, that the Lithuanians at this period were such dominant lords, and acted so cruelly, that scarcely anyone, and especially the Letts, 'dared live in the small villages. Not even by leaving their houses deserted to seek the dark hiding places of the forests could they escape them', Henry states. Of course, this is a story meant first of all to portray the cruelty of the Lithuanian enemy, and to convey the sad message that refuge could not be found anywhere, and hence not even in the designated hiding places of the forests.²²

Not only did the forests not offer protection, they were in fact also the places of several kinds of abominable practices, and I shall deal with the most obvious of these – the forests as places of pagan worship – in a little while. Firstly, it is equally obvious that the forests worked well for ambushes: the pagan enemy would be lurking in the woods, from where he would mount sneak attacks on the Christians, instead of fighting in the open. Referring to 1205, Henry recalls how:

A short time thereafter the pilgrims, leaving the fort of Üxküll to collect grain, were attacked by Livonians hiding in the woods. Seventeen of them were killed, some of whom suffering a cruel martyrdom were immolated to the pagan gods.²³

It is clear from the context of many of these stories that pagan ambushes from the woods upon the Christians would often result in torture and murder. This was the case when, in 1209, a German army were in pursuit of a fleeing Estonian army. The Germans marched to the river Ümera (Latv. Jumara) 'not knowing that the army of the Esthonians were lurking in the forests near it'. They were taken by surprise when the Estonian army rushed upon them and were even left alone, since the army of the allied Livs coming up from the rear, upon realizing

²² The quote continues: 'For the Lithuanians, laying ambushes for them at all times in the forests, seized them, killing some and capturing others, and took the latter back to their own country, seizing all their possessions' (HCL XIII.4, p. 69; Brundage, pp. 90–91).

²³ HCL IX.12, p. 31; Brundage, p. 52 ('... insidiantibus in silvis ...'); cf. also HCL XIV.8, p. 81. An example of attackers using the woods for ambushes but without success is HCL XII.4, p. 60; Brundage, p. 81: 'After this, however, the Lithuanians entered Semgallia with a great army and began to kill and lay waste all they found. The Semgalls, indeed, ambushing them on the road and felling trees, killed almost all of them on their way back. And the Semgalls honourably sent gifts to the Rigans from their spoils.' The Latin text reads: 'Semigalli vero insidiantes eis in via et silvas succidentes in reditu fere omnes occiderunt.' Thus it might seem that actually it was the Lithuanians who were using the woods this time, and that the Semgallian attack on them was maybe not carried out 'on the road' but rather while the Lithuanian army was on the move back. When the Semgallians destroyed the forest, they were then able to cut down the enemy as well.

the Estonian ambush, ‘immediately turned to flight, and the Germans remained alone.’²⁴ The Germans should maybe have considered more carefully whether or not to fight the Estonian pagans on this occasion, since Henry relates that the Germans suffered numerous casualties following the flight of their Livish allies:

The Esthonians, however, followed both the Germans, the Livonians, and the infantry of the Letts from right and left. They captured about a hundred of them, killed some, and, leading the others back towards the Sedde, tortured them in a cruel martyrdom. Of the fourteen of the latter, they roasted some alive, and, after stripping the others of their clothes and making crosses on their backs with their swords, they cut their throats, and thus, we hope, sent them into the heavenly company of the martyrs.²⁵

Besides being sites for ignoble ambushes, causing severe damage and numerous casualties among the German troops, the forests were abominable places in yet another way as well. In the forests, terrifying acts would take place. The forests were places of death, even providing the locus for the deadly sin of suicide: ‘Since it was now winter, the Lithuanians who escaped through the woods, because of the difficulty of crossing the Dvina, either drowned in the Dvina or hanged themselves in the woods (*in silvis suspenderunt*).’²⁶ This feature of what looks like a collective suicide can be said to have later established itself as something of a trait in European literature: in the ‘Inferno’ of his *Divine Comedy*, Dante pictured exactly the ‘violent against themselves’ as trees in a gloomy forest.²⁷

²⁴ HCL XIV.8, p. 81; Brundage, p. 101.

²⁵ HCL XIV.8, p. 80; Brundage, p. 102. The forests as places from where ambushes could be made are also prominent in other historical periods. For a short overview, see J.R. McNeill, ‘Woods and Warfare in World History’, *Environmental History* 9/3 (2004), 388–410.

²⁶ HCL XXV.4, p. 184; Brundage, p. 203. It is not the woods themselves that finish off the Lithuanians on this occasion, but rather the fact that they ‘had despoiled the Blessed Virgin’s land, and Her Son returned vengeance against them. To Him be praise throughout the ages,’ writes Henry.

²⁷ The relevant lines in Canto XIII of the *Divine Comedy/Inferno* are as follows:

‘Nessus had not yet made the further shore
Before we’d reached a wood in which there lay
No clearly marked out pathway any more.
Not green in foliage but a dusky grey;
Not smooth the branches – warped and gnarled like roots;
No apples there but poisoned stungings sway.
Between Cecina and Corneto the wild brutes
That hate the cultivated land infest

Thus in Henry's view, the forests in fact did *not* offer the expected protection from enemies. People hiding in the forests could *not* sustain their lives, because the uncultivated forests did not offer human nourishment of any kind; and, furthermore, the forests were the sites of unjust ambushes and truly abominable behaviour. In this sense, to Henry, the forests did not *save* lives; rather, they *took* lives. The forests were to be shunned by any human. In this sense, the forests of the Baltic were regarded as uncanny and fearful.

The 'Un-Cultured' Forests

In his *Etymologies*, the seventh-century Bishop Isidore of Seville included a section on 'Remote places' in his chapter on 'Mountains and other terms for landforms': '[r]emote places (*devium*) are secret and concealed, as if they were away from the road (*via*). The same places are also called impassable places (*invium*).'²⁸ Clearly, the famous Iberian writer is here establishing the conceptual relations between concealed and open – or secret and public – as a binary opposition reflected in the Latin words of *devium* and *via*. Even if some linguists would maybe nowadays object to such etymological reasoning and the conceptualizations ensuing from it, it seems as if Henry would have been quite inspired by the use of such dichotomies had he read Isidore. Unfortunately, it is not possible to enlist any of Isidore's works as possible sources for Henry's writings,²⁹ even if Henry in fact also seems to work by establishing and employing binary oppositions. With Henry, however, such an opposition is established directly between the forests and the roads and the behaviour in these different settings by the groups using them. Thus we read in Henry how the Germans almost always use the roads – at times even singing while

No brakes as harsh and dense in barbs and shoots.'

Dante, *The Divine Comedy. Hell. Purgatory. Heaven in a Terza Rima Translation*, trans. Peter Dale (London, 1996), p. 51. See also Alexander Murray, *Suicide in the Middle Ages*, vol. 1 (Oxford, 1998), esp. pp. 81–91.

²⁸ *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, trans. Stephen A. Barney, W.J. Lewis, J.A. Beach and Oliver Berghof (Cambridge, 2006), XIV, viii, 32, p. 299, col. 2.

²⁹ Considering the number of extant manuscripts containing (elements of) Isidore's *Etymologiae*, the chances that Isidore's work would have been a part of a library at, for instance, the bishopric in Riga, are in fact not that small. Isidore's *Etymologiae* survives in more than a thousand manuscript copies, a truly impressive number, evidencing, of course, the immense popularity and importance of the work, which also was among the first works printed in the fifteenth century. See *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, p. 24. For a discussion of the biblical and liturgical material which Henry of Livonia might have had access to and made active use of, see Arbusow, 'Das entlehnte Sprachgut'. See also Wilis Bilkins, *Die Spuren von Vulgata, Brevier und Missale in der Sprache von Heinrichs Chronikon Livoniae* (Riga, 1928).

marching³⁰ – while the pagans most often use the forests, when moving from one destination to another: ‘All the other Livs and Lettgallians returned without any wound. Many of them came again to the Germans, from the forests to which they had fled, as the Germans returned by the road.’³¹

Henry relates how, in 1211, bands of Livish warriors on the rampage crossed the woods into the Estonian region of Saccala (Est. Sakala), pillaging and murdering on their way. As the story is told by Henry, it seems that the warrior bands would cross through the forests on their way to their targets, while they would use the road when returning home with all their loot:

They seized the Esthonians, who were returning to the villages for food. The males they killed; the women they spared and took away with them. They also took much loot. Returning home, other Letts met them on the road, going again into Ungannia. What the first left, these took. What the first neglected, these took care of. Those who had escaped from the first were killed by these. Into the regions and villages which the first had not penetrated, these went, and, taking many spoils and captives, they returned. As they were returning, they again met still other Letts on the road into Ungannia. Whatever was left undone by the earlier men was fully completed by these. They killed all the men whom they caught: they spared neither the rich nor the aged; all were condemned to the sword. Russin, however, as the others were doing to avenge their friends, killed all whom he took, some by roasting, others by some other cruel death. When these men had returned to their forts, still other Letts from Beverin started out with a few men. They crossed through the woods into the province of Saccalia, which is called Hallist.³²

In his chronicle Henry also gives other examples in which this division of the road and the forest is obvious. We find the chronicler complaining about the conditions when fighting the Lithuanians, forcing the Germans to go first into battle, ‘since the road was narrow because of the nearby forest’, which obviously the Germans would not fight in.³³ Only very seldom do the Germans actually enter the forests of the Baltic. They needed to have local forces with them. I have in fact found only four such examples in all of Henry’s chronicle, and in every instance, the Germans were accompanied by their native allies: sometime in the second half of the 1180s the first missionary bishop to Livonia, Meinhard (r. 1186–96), fled to the forests together with the people of Üxküll (Latv. Ikšķile) to avoid raids from

³⁰ HCL XXII.3, p. 150: ‘... per viam cantantes redierunt...’

³¹ HCL XXII.3, p. 150; Brundage, p. 169.

³² HCL XV.7, pp. 94–5; Brundage, p. 116.

³³ HCL XXV.4, p. 184; Brundage, p. 202.

the Lithuanians.³⁴ We learn of how some Germans, pursuing a band of Russians in 1208, came across a number of 'treacherous fugitives' in the forests and swamps, whom they then 'killed with a cruel death, as they deserved, and thus rooted out traitors from those regions'.³⁵ In 1211 some Germans, in the company of the Livish leader Caupo (d. 1217), entered the forest and swamps. A three-day journey ended in terrible losses, since, as we learn, 'Their horses gave out on the road and about a hundred of them fell down and died'.³⁶ In the same year, Theodoric, a brother of Bishop Albert of Riga (r. 1199–1229), together with a nobleman, Bertold of Wenden (d. 1217), entered into the forests to find fugitives. Apparently, on this occasion, the Germans stumbled into one of the hiding places of the local pagans. Henry reports that they encountered an enclosure in the densest part of the forest. Here, the pagans had felled the trees 'on all sides so that when the army came they could save themselves and their possessions'.³⁷ On most other occasions, the Germans would simply send in some of their allied local tribes to pursue the pagan fugitives and drag them out of the woods.³⁸

To Henry, the roads, then, seem to symbolize orderliness, method and planning – in short, a Christian cultivated landscape – whereas the forests represent the uncultured, the chaotic and – in an Isidorian sense – the 'de-viant'.³⁹ This feature of the uncultured forests in opposition to the cultured roads and other components of a controlled nature or human landscape becomes especially clear when Henry describes the region of Vironia (Ger. Wierland, Est. Virumaa):

They took with them the Saccalians and even the Ungannians and marched into Jerwan. They chose guides for themselves from among the Jerwanians and they spent the whole night entering Wierland, a very beautiful and fertile land with level fields.⁴⁰

³⁴ HCL I.5, p. 3.

³⁵ HCL XII.1, p. 58; Brundage, p. 79.

³⁶ HCL XV.7, p. 94; Brundage, p. 115.

³⁷ HCL XV.7, p. 96; Brundage, p. 117.

³⁸ HCL XV.7, p. 96.

³⁹ The forests were in fact so disorderly and chaotic that they did not even make it possible to count the number of men killed in battle or pursuit: 'After all the Estonians had been put to flight, the Livonians, Letts and Saxons pursued them and killed some of them in the woods. The number of the dead ran almost to a thousand – nay, they were innumerable, for in the woods and swamps they could not be counted.' HCL XX.3, p. 136; Brundage, p. 163.

⁴⁰ HCL XXIII.7, p. 159; Brundage, p. 178: '... terra fertilis et pulcherrima et camporum planicie spaciosa'

Here the Vironia region is firmly established as the antithesis of the otherwise densely forested landscapes. Henry feels the landscape opening itself to him: it is spacious in opposition to the dense forests; it is fertile in opposition to the forests in which people die of hunger and thirst; and it is beautiful (*pulcher*) in contrast to the gloomy (*tenebrosa*) places of refuge in the forest. To my knowledge, this is one of only two instances where Henry allows himself what superficially seems a purely 'aesthetic' designation. Henry has no apparent need to describe the landscape further. What matters to him is the fertility, spaciousness and beauty of this landscape.

Of course, Henry is not at all alone in European literature when considering some landscapes beautiful and others not. The literary scholar Ernst Robert Curtius made famous the literary topos *locus amoenus*, claiming that this forms the principal motif of all nature descriptions from the Roman period to the sixteenth century.⁴¹ However, Henry seems quite at odds with some of the other Christian writers of his day, who would consider, for example, the solitude of forests as almost paradisaical and a perfect place for contemplation, thus combining beauty with a purely religious purpose. Peter Damian (c. 1007–72), for instance, tells of the young Romuald (d. 1027), that 'whenever he went hunting and entered a *locus amoenus* in the woods, would feel his soul burn with desire for the desert, and would be saying within himself, "Oh, how well hermits could live in these recesses of the forest, how perfectly they would be able to contemplate quietly here, away from all the disturbance of worldly noise"'.⁴² On a quite

⁴¹ Ernst Robert Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1990), pp. 183–202. Leonid Arbusow, *Colores Rhetorici*, p. 73 has noticed this phrase in Henry's chronicle. Arbusow connects it to Curtius's observations, arguing that the precise notion of the place as beautiful and spacious is what puts Henry's phrase directly into the category of *locus amoenus*, as defined by Curtius.

⁴² John Howe, 'Creating Symbolic Landscapes: Medieval Development of Sacred Space', in *Inventing Medieval Landscapes: Senses of Place in Western Europe*, ed. John Howe and Michael Wolfe (Gainesville, FL, 2002), pp. 208–23 (here 210–11). Howe goes on to relate how St Bernard of Clairvaux (c. 1090–1153) would state in a letter that, if religiously dedicated, you would 'find more [by] labouring amongst the woods than you ever will amongst books. Woods and stones will teach you what you can never hear from any master. Do you imagine you cannot suck honey from the rocks and oil from the hardest stone; that the mountains do not drop sweetness and the hills flow with milk and honey; that the valleys are not filled with corn?' (Howe, 'Creating Symbolic Landscapes', p. 211). This phrase by St Bernard is also quoted by Le Goff, 'The Wilderness', p. 54. Clearly, the last description from St Bernard would be more in line with the ideals of Henry as well. After all, *loci amoeni* could be shaped and improved, were we to believe the Christian authors. See Howe, 'Creating Symbolic Landscapes', p. 211.

different note, in his *Topographia Hibernica*, Gerald of Wales would write of the Irish as a people stuck in an early phase of evolution:

This is a people of forest-dwellers, and inhospitable; a people living off beasts and like beasts; a people that still adheres to the most primitive way of pastoral living. For as humanity progresses from the forests to the fields, and towards village life and civil society, this people is too lazy for agriculture and is heedless of material comfort; and they positively dislike the rules and legalities of civil intercourse; thus they have been unable and unwilling to abandon their traditional life of forest and pasture.⁴³

To Gerald, of course, only the civilizing effects of the invasion of Henry II (r. 1154–89) would make sure that this people were thoroughly brought up-to-date. Henry of Livonia would maybe have felt himself more in agreement with the views of Gerald of Wales than with those of the religious writers just mentioned. Surely, he would not have considered the dense forests of the Baltic to be places for contemplation and religious improvement. However, Henry would probably agree with these writers when it came to regarding some parts of the landscape as, in a way, religiously charged: humanly cultivated land – involving without doubt the clearing of forests! – is his ideal landscape, and it is to such landscape that Henry's religious connotations are connected, thus in a way fusing the insights of writers like Gerald and St Bernard.⁴⁴ This way, at least, we can maybe better understand Henry's reasoning when, following the Latin Christian conquest of Dorpat in 1224 and the ensuing peace agreement with the neighbouring peoples, he states that:

The Esthonians left their forts and rebuilt their burnt-out villages and churches. The Livonians and Letts, too, did likewise. They came out of the hiding places in the forests in which they had hidden now for many years in times of war and

⁴³ *Topographia Hibernica*, III.10. Quoted from Joep Leerssen, 'Wildness, Wilderness, and Ireland: Medieval and Early-Modern Patterns in the Demarcation of Civility', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 56/1 (1995), 25–39 (here 30). Leerssen states further of Gerald's views of the Irish: 'In short, the Irish are what Gerald calls a *gens silvestris*, a term which serves to describe their habitat and their lifestyle and proves their cultural inferiority, even their lack of true humanity.' See also Robert Bartlett, *The Making of Europe: Conquest, Colonization and Cultural Change 950–1350* (London, 1993) for an excellent overview of medieval Christian expansionism, which includes both the Western Isles and the Baltic.

⁴⁴ Still, it must be remembered that we have in fact no indication that Henry had actually read anything by these authors. The examples are only used here in an attempt to bring the themes inherent in Henry's chronicle together with elements of European literature. Other paradigmatic authors besides the ones mentioned could be listed instead.

each man returned to his village and his fields. They plowed and sowed in great security, such as they had not had for the previous forty years, for both before the preaching of God's word and after their baptism, the Lithuanians and other peoples had never given them any rest or security. Now, therefore, they rested, rejoicing in their fields and their labours, and there was no one who terrified them.⁴⁵

The opposition between order and chaos, between Christian (culture) and pagan (nature), is also visible when Henry relates how the pagans came out from their hiding places in the woods to obtain food. The food they wanted so desperately was bread – the product, of course, exactly of an orderly, or in other words cultivated, landscape.⁴⁶ Man, then, is only brought back to his original meaning of life – which of course is to till the soil, like Adam and Eve – when a true, everlasting Christian peace has been established.

The (Pagan) Sacrality of Forests

That notions of cultivation and non-cultivation were somehow connected to notions of civilization and wilderness is also testified to by Isidore of Seville, referred to above. Isidore in his *Etymologies* directly highlights the opposition between cultivation and non-cultivation:

Wildernesses (*desertum*) are so called because they are not planted (*scere*), and therefore, in a manner of speaking, they are abandoned (*deserere*), as are wooded and mountainous areas, places that are the opposite of fruitful regions that have the richest soil.⁴⁷

Actually, only very seldom do the Christians in Henry's chronicle enter the forests themselves. The dragging out of the pagans from their hiding places is almost always reportedly performed by other – former or allied – pagans,

⁴⁵ HCL XXIX.1, pp. 207–8; Brundage, p. 229: '... de latibulis silvarum egredientes ...' The quote in fact contains a reference to John 7:53. Compare Henry's '... rediit unusquisque in villam suam ...' with John's: '... et reversi sunt unusquisque in domum suam'.

⁴⁶ Cf. HCL XIX.3, p. 124; also XI.5, p. 52.

⁴⁷ *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, XIV, viii, 31, p. 299, cols 1–2. Here, as we can see, the dichotomy in Isidore's conceptualizations cannot quite be upheld simply by the apparent semantics in the Latin words for 'wilderness' or 'fruitful regions'. Rather, he argues by way of immediate similarity in the words and only establishes his oppositions by alluding to some sort of common sense or observation.

sometimes following the orders of the Germans. And when we read that armed Christians in fact do enter the woods, they are always in the company of their native allies. Thus, Henry in a sense displays a marked anxiety when it comes to the forests. These are not the beautiful, airy, green ones we all know from Romantic literature. The forests are sites of violent ambushes and of deviant behaviour; they are uncultivated chaotic residences of refugees. A forest was not a *locus amoenus* to Henry, but rather a *locus horribilis*. However, a *locus horribilis* can be made into a *locus amoenus*, as we will see below.

This opposition between wild and uncultivated areas on the one hand and man-made and levelled agrarian fields on the other of course highlights – and this has been hinted at earlier in this chapter – an analogous dichotomy between paganism and Christianity. Linda Kaljundi has investigated Henry's conceptions of places and peoples. She states: 'As the forests are described to hide many idolatrous things in them, entering into the forest means also entering the idolatrous landscape.'⁴⁸ That some pagans worshipped nature in some form, and often used natural sites in the landscape as places of worship rather than man-made religious buildings,⁴⁹ was not something unknown to Western Christians. That this could take place in forests was no secret to them either. To cite Isidore again:

A grove (*lucus*) is a place enclosed by dense trees that keep light (*lux*, gen. *lucis*) from reaching the ground. It is also possible that the word is derived from the lighting (*conlucere*) of many lights, which were kindled there because of pagan beliefs and rituals.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Linda Kaljundi, *Waiting for the Barbarians: The Imagery, Dynamics and Functions of the Other in Northern German Missionary Chronicles, 11th–Early 13th Centuries*. *The Gestae Hammaburgensis Ecclesiae Pontificum of Adam of Bremen*, *Chronica Slavorum of Helmold of Bosau*, *Chronica Slavorum of Arnold of Lübeck*, and *Chronicon Livoniae of Henry of Livonia* (unpublished MA dissertation, University of Tartu, 2005), p. 259.

⁴⁹ Because of the scarcity of reliable written sources, Pre-Christian Baltic pagan religion (mythology and ritual) remains very difficult to investigate. Most of the information used by modern historians of religion for this region stems from folklore material collected in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. See Marija Gimbutas, 'The Pre-Christian Religion of Lithuania', in *La Cristianizzazione della Lituania. Atti del Colloquio Internazionale di storia ecclesiastica in occasione del VI centenario della Lituania cristiana (1387–1987)*, ed. Paulius Rabikauskas (Vatican City, 1989), pp. 13–25 and the literature listed herein. Also Haralds Biezais, *Die Hauptgöttinnen der alten Letten* (Uppsala, 1955); Biezais, *Die Gottesgestalt der lettischen Volksreligion* (Stockholm, 1961) and Biezais, *Die himmlische Götterfamilie der alten Letten* (Stockholm, 1972).

⁵⁰ *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, XIV, viii, 30, p. 299, col. 1.

Henry mentions pagan sacred groves several times in his chronicle. These sacred groves were venerated in and for themselves. Thus, apparently the sacredness of some of these groves consisted both of their form created *by* nature and their place *in* nature: they were perceived as places where numinous feelings could be more easily aroused than in other places.⁵¹ Sometimes the sacred grove and the pagan god are conflated in Henry's narrative:

The Christian army rejoiced, shouted, and implored God. The enemy also cried out, rejoicing in their Tharapita. They called upon their sacred grove, the Christians upon Jesus.⁵²

This story could be a reflection of the fact that the pagans of the Baltic actually did not regard the groves and the gods as two different things.⁵³ Apparently, they did not, as Christians do, distinguish between God and the place of His worship. Henry relates that in one of these groves the pagan god Tharapita was actually said to have been born and to have resided until leaving for the island of Ösel (Est. Saaremaa).⁵⁴ Interestingly, this is the second instance in Henry's chronicle of a specific landscape being considered beautiful: the pagan god Tharapita's birthplace is characterized as consisting of 'a mountain and a lovely forest'.⁵⁵ Why, suddenly, is a part of this pagan forest considered 'lovely' or beautiful (*silva pulcherrima*) by Henry? The answer to this question is, I believe, connected with the actions which immediately followed his description: standing in this grove, Henry would look on while his fellow priest committed a deliberate act of de-sacralization, when 'he went and cut down the images and likenesses which had been made there of their gods'.⁵⁶ Added to this, we are told

⁵¹ For a somewhat formalistic, but nevertheless inspiring, juxtaposition of paganism and Christianity in the Baltic, see Przymisław Urbanczyk, 'The Politics of Conversion in North Central Europe', in *The Cross Goes North: Processes of Conversion in Northern Europe, AD 300–1300*, ed. Martin Carver (York, 2004), pp. 15–27. See also Stefan Brink, 'Mythologizing Landscape: Place and Space of Cult and Myths', in *Kontinuitäten und Brüche in der Religionsgeschichte. Festschrift für Anders Hultgård zu seinem 65. Geburtstag am 23.12.2001*, ed. Michael Stausberg (Berlin, 2001), pp. 76–112.

⁵² HCL XXX.4, p. 218; Brundage, p. 242.

⁵³ Of course, the wording in Henry's chronicle could also be taken as a warning not to take Henry at face value. Maybe he did not fully comprehend the Baltic pagan religion(s).

⁵⁴ HCL XXIV.5, p. 175.

⁵⁵ HCL XXIV.5, p. 175; Brundage, p. 193: '... ubi erat mons et silva pulcherrima ...'. Brundage translates the Latin *pulcher* as 'beautiful' in the first instance and 'lovely' in this second instance.

⁵⁶ HCL XXIV.5, p. 175; Brundage, p. 194: 'Et ibat alter sacerdos succidens imagines et similitudines deorum suorum ibi factas ...'.

that 'The natives wondered greatly that blood did not flow and believed the more in the priests' sermons.'⁵⁷ This is of course exactly why this part of a pagan forest can be considered beautiful by Henry: it has now been conquered and made into a Christian environment. Unfortunately, we still do not know how beauty actually looked to Henry, since his lack of description leaves us with no other clues to this than the ones given by our own imagination.

At other times the pagan holy places seem taboo for the Christians. Following a battle with a band of Öselians, we learn that Germans 'pursued them from the village into the field, killing them through the fields up to their sacred grove'.⁵⁸ Here, at some apparent boundary between the pagan holy site itself and the surrounding landscape, the Germans seemingly stopped. '*Usque ad lucum*', Henry writes – not '*in luco*'. Stopped outside this holy place, the Germans 'stained their holy woods with the blood of many of their slain men'. Brundage's translation is powerful here, offering 'stained', which is, of course, a metaphorically very strong verb; as is the original *maculaverunt* used by Henry. What was going on? Did the Germans not dare enter? Why didn't they simply destroy this pagan holy place? Did Henry actually regard the act of killing *outside* this locality as an act of desecration in itself, and thus just as effective as an actual, physical destruction of the site?⁵⁹ Obviously, what this story highlights, but which I shall not go further into in this chapter, is the fact that the Christians at times actually regarded the pagan sanctuaries and the pagan pantheon as an otherworldly force which had to be taken into account. Also, the pagan religious world obviously did have power, albeit not of the good, Christian kind, but rather as the abode of some sort of demons,

⁵⁷ HCL XXIV.5, p. 175; Brundage, p. 194. Stories of the desacralization of pagan holy places abound in Christian literature, but sometimes the de-sacralizers are reminded that it might not always be such a good idea to demolish the pagan sanctuaries. See the letter from Pope Gregory the Great (r. 590–604) to Mellitus (d. 624) in 601 (as rendered in the Venerable Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*), ordering him not to tear down the pagan sanctuaries because it would not help the mission, but actually might even hinder it. Instead, the missionaries should have re-dedicated the buildings and shrines to the service of the Christian God. To Gregory a degree of pragmatism worked much better than a high-profile destruction. See Bede, *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Oxford, 1969), pp. 106–9. For a discussion of the de-sacralization of paganism in the Baltic, see Torben K. Nielsen, 'The Making of New Cultural Landscapes'.

⁵⁸ HCL XXIII.9, p. 166; Brundage, p. 185: 'Et persequuti sunt eos Theuthonici de villa in campum, occidentes eos per campos usque ad lucum ipsorum ...'

⁵⁹ HCL XXIII.9, p. 166; Brundage, p. 185: '... et ipsam sanctam silvarum ipsorum multorum interfectorum suorum sanguine maculaverunt'.

able to do harm and damage if allowed.⁶⁰ The forests can also be seen as sites for pagan religion, as in the story of the Liv who came out from his *latibulum* to report a vision:

I saw the god of the Livonians, who foretold the future to us. He was, indeed, an image growing out of a tree from the breast upwards, and he told me that a Lithuanian army would come tomorrow.

In the following phrase it becomes evident that the Christian priest takes pagan beliefs quite seriously, while on the surface pretending otherwise:

The priest, knowing this to be indeed an illusion of the devil, because at this time of autumn there was no road by which the Lithuanians could come, continuing in his prayers, commended himself to God. When, in the morning, they heard or saw nothing that the Livonian's phantom had foretold, they all came together. The priest then execrated their idolatry and affirmed that a phantom of this kind was an illusion of the demons.⁶¹

Apparently, it was only the state of the roads in autumn – and of course the non-appearance of the Lithuanians – which convinced the priest that the Livonian could not have experienced a proper vision in his 'enchanted forest'. Had the Livonian told his story in wintertime, the priest would have been likely to believe his story.

This story highlights yet another feature of the relationship between Christianity and the paganism of the woods. If in Henry's chronicle we find the pagan gods manifested in the dense woods, in which landscape can we then encounter the Christian God?

Actually, the Christian God manifests himself in the world on several occasions in Henry's chronicle. In congruence maybe with Henry's symbolic

⁶⁰ This is a theme in Raza Mažeika, 'Granting Power to Enemy Gods in the Chronicles of the Baltic Crusades', in *Medieval Frontiers: Concepts and Practices*, ed. David Abulafia and Nora Berend (Aldershot, 2002), pp. 153–71. Mažeika offers the following conclusion to her very interesting investigation, drawing mostly on the chronicle of Henry and slightly more recent works (dating approximately from the first decades of the fourteenth century): '... Baltic pagans sometimes treat Christian religion as a formality to be accepted or cast off as convenient; yet the pagans sometimes grant power to Jesus as a physical, powerful enemy. More surprisingly, crusaders fighting the Baltic pagans are portrayed as granting power to pagan deities and acknowledging the efficacy of pagan rites' (Mažeika, 'Granting Power', p. 171).

⁶¹ HCL X.14, p. 35; Brundage, p. 66.

interpretations of the forests as the abode of demonic practices and the birthplace for pagan gods, it is no big surprise to find that all of the interventions from the Christian God occur in the maritime parts of the region: His miracles are never performed in the woods, but only at sea. Like the landscape so greatly appreciated by Henry (see above), the sea is also described as 'wide and spacious'.⁶² The Virgin Mary is named 'the Star of the Sea'.⁶³ The sea is considered a good landscape, in that it annually brings the armed pilgrims to relieve the Christians from their tribulations in Riga, surrounded as they often were by hostile pagans and attacked by Russians.⁶⁴ Similarly, the waters of the rivers floating into the sea bring rescue, in that they serve to break pagan blockades:

The Rigans received the pilgrims with joy and blessed the Lord, Who had comforted His people in this present tribulation. The waters of the rivers wishing to have their strong course free and likewise the sea, in the violence of storms, afterwards broke up the objects which the Oesilians had put in the depths.⁶⁵

In a naval battle off the coast of Ösel in 1215, dangerous floating fires lit by the pagans threaten the Germans. Aroused by the prayers of the bishop of Riga, God changes the direction of the wind to let the fire float back. Later in the same battle, prayers to the Mother of God secured that two of the Öselian ships collided and sank.⁶⁶ Only Bishop Philip of Ratzeburg's (r. 1204–15) prayers to God would save the Christians.⁶⁷ Several other examples could be put forward, offering perhaps the conclusion that Henry, having come originally across the sea to the Baltic, felt more safe and familiar in this environment.

The forests served as a refuge for the Baltic people in times of distress and suffering, but to Henry they were in fact seedbeds for violent ambushes against

⁶² HCL XXV.2, p. 178; Brundage, pp. 197–8.

⁶³ HCL XXV.2, p. 178; Brundage, p. 198.

⁶⁴ HCL XI.9, p. 57 relates a story from 1208 in which a Russian attack was avoided because God sent adverse winds to the harbour of Riga which stopped the armed pilgrims from returning to Germany. The Russians turned back when they learned that the armed pilgrims had had to postpone their departure.

⁶⁵ HCL XIX.2, p. 124; Brundage, pp. 143–4.

⁶⁶ HCL XIX.5, p. 128–9; Brundage, pp. 149–50. Henry quotes from the Breviary hymn *Ave Maris Stella*, sung at vespers on the feasts of the Virgin. The scene described probably took place on Thursday 2 July, which is the Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin, when this hymn would have been sung in office.

⁶⁷ Philip himself did not like to be out at sea, if we are to believe Henry. We learn that he 'abstained from the solemnities of the Mass only with many groans while he was at sea, although he took communion every other day between Sunday services' (HCL XIX.6, p. 131; Brundage, p. 151).

the Christians. For the indigenous people, the forest would be the residence of their religious pantheon and in itself a place of awe, where numinous feelings could be stirred. To Henry, on the other hand, the forest was the abode of demonic rituals and devilish phantasms. His perception of the dense and dark forests in the Baltic in a sense seems to have underlined his own thorough alienation and feeling of 'Otherness' when confronted with the pagan peoples. These pagan peoples were in violent opposition to exactly that specific kind of Christian civilization which Henry, however, considered a precious gift as well as the only way to salvation. Clearly, he would have regarded the local landscape as both frightening and awe-inspiring.

Chapter 7

‘Verbis non verberibus’: The Representation of Sermons in the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia

Carsten Selch Jensen

Introduction

In the summer of 1198 the newly appointed Bishop Bertold (r. 1196–98) arrived in his Livonian bishopric accompanied by an army of crusaders. The previous year Bertold and a small entourage had been forced to flee the country, barely escaping alive due to unexpected hostilities of the Livs. As a consequence the bishop was now accompanied by well-armed crusaders ready for battle.¹ From what we know, this was the first time that crusaders actually set foot on Livonian soil. Bishop Meinhard, who had been the first bishop of Livonia (r. 1186–96) and the predecessor of Bertold, had on at least one occasion threatened the unruly Livs that he would summon an army if they kept opposing his missionary work.² Yet such an army never materialized during Meinhard’s lifetime.

According to Henry of Livonia the majority of the Livs reacted to this second visit by their formally appointed bishop and his crusaders by renouncing the Christian belief altogether. Instead, they prepared themselves for battle. Before battle commenced, however, the Livs approached the bishop and the crusader camp to raise objections against this intrusion by a foreign army:

[The Livs] sent a messenger to the bishop, asking why he had brought an army against them. The bishop replied that, ‘as dogs return to their vomit, so they had returned too often from the faith to paganism.’ The Livs then said: ‘We shall do away with this reason. If you send back your army, you may return with your people to your bishopric in peace, and you may compel those who have received

¹ HCL II.2, pp. 8–9; Brundage, pp. 31–2. I wish to thank Linda Kaljundi and Alan V. Murray for very useful comments regarding this chapter.

² HCL I.11, pp. 5–6; Brundage, pp. 28–9.

the faith to keep it. You may lead others to accept it, but with words, not with blows.³

I consider this text to be one of the central literary compositions in Henry's chronicle, in which the chronicler presents to his readers two of the main themes in his description of the conversion and Christianization of Livonia and Estonia in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries: firstly the question of the verbal confrontation between the Christian missionaries and the indigenous people, and secondly the question of whether or not conversion could (or should) be achieved by the use of force. Both issues are skilfully interwoven by the chronicler in this particular account of a meeting between the newly appointed bishop and his supposed congregation. In this way, Henry sets his scheme for the rest of the chronicle with regards to the overall representation of the process of conversion as the decisive phenomenon in the chronicle.

The aim of this chapter will be to analyse various aspects of these verbal confrontations as key elements in the chronicle: who are the preachers and how do they fit in with the rest of the actors in the chronicle? What is the setting of the various sermons? What theological contents can be found in the sermons that indicate Henry's own approach towards conversion and missionary work?

Sermons in Missionary Chronicles

A few years ago the German church historian Lutz E. von Padberg published his research on early medieval missionary sermons as an essential part of the process of conversion and Christianization.⁴ This work analyses how religious confrontations between Christians and non-Christians are staged by the chroniclers through carefully reproduced sermons revealing what was believed to be essential in the teaching of Christianity to a pagan population.⁵ As such, these sermons might tell us a lot about the theology and missionary ideals of a particular period in history – but what period do these sermons then exactly relate to? Not necessarily the period described by the chronicler. Von Padberg

³ HCL II.5, pp. 9–10; Brundage, p. 32.

⁴ Lutz E. von Padberg, *Die Inszenierung Religiöser Konfrontationen. Theorie und Praxis der Missionspredigt im Frühen Mittelalter* (Stuttgart, 2003). In his opening chapter (pp. 1–11) von Padberg discusses the current research on missionary preaching of the early medieval period, referring also to the general research into sermons and preaching throughout the Middle Ages. See also Arnold Angenendt, *Geschichte der Religiosität im Mittelalter* (Darmstadt, 1997), pp. 478–81.

⁵ Padberg, *Die Inszenierung*, p. 11.

points out that several of these missionary chronicles (and the sermons within) were written down many years (perhaps several decades) after the actual events had taken place.⁶ In a few cases there might have been some sort of connection between the chronicler and his main character, with the possibility of some sort of oral transmission. In most situations, however, that was definitely not the case – instead, the chronicler would have had to compose his own version of what might have happened and what might have been said during the encounters between Christian missionaries and a pagan audience. Thus the sermons can hardly be viewed as reliable reproductions of actual sermons; rather they are 'sample sermons', reproducing the theological ideas and teachings thought to be essential at the time of the chronicler, probably aimed at a clerical audience rather than illiterate pagans.⁷ Similar ideas have been put forward in another recent book on the early medieval conversion and Christianization of the Scandinavian countries. Here the Norwegian church historian Olav Tveito discusses, among other things, the credibility of sources like the *Vita Ansgarii*, with its many reproduced sermons that present the confrontation between Christian missionaries and pagan Scandinavians.⁸

Other scholars have studied missionary chronicles and sermons closer in time to Henry. Especially interesting is the research carried out by the American historian Beverly Mayne Kienzle on the preaching campaigns of Cistercian monks against the Albigensian heretics in the second half of the twelfth century and the early decades of the thirteenth century.⁹ In the second part of this book, Kienzle analyses sermons given by Pope Innocent III (r. 1198–1216) at the beginning of the crusades against the Albigensians, as well as sermons said to have been preached by the Cistercian monks commissioned by the pope to recruit new crusaders and to compel the heretics to give up their wrongful beliefs. This part of the research covers the period 1198–1229, roughly the same period as that of Henry of Livonia.¹⁰ Kienzle points out that the important work

⁶ Padberg, *Die Inszenierung*, p. 17.

⁷ Padberg, *Die Inszenierung*, pp. 10 and 16. Padberg also points to the fact that the actual sermons must have been in the vernacular tongue and not in Latin when presented to the indigenous people.

⁸ Olav Tveito, *Ad fines orbis terrae – like til jordens ender. En studie i primær trosformidling i nordisk kristningskontekst* (Oslo, 2005), pp. 149–71, esp. pp. 156–66.

⁹ Beverly Mayne Kienzle, *Cistercians, Heresy and Crusade in Occitania, 1145–1229* (York, 2001).

¹⁰ The three main chronicles concerning the Albigensian crusades are: Peter of les Vaux-de-Cernay, *The History of the Albigensian Crusade*, trans. W.A. Sibly and M.D. Sibly (Woodbridge, 2000); *The Song of the Cathar Wars: A History of the Albigensian Crusades*, trans. Janet Shirley (Aldershot, 1996); *The Chronicle of William of Puylaurens: The Albigensian Crusade and its Aftermath*, trans. W.A. Sibly and M.D. Sibly (Woodbridge, 2003).

of preaching is often referred to in the chronicles as the 'business of the faith and peace' (*negotium fidei et pacis*) resembling some of the wordings that are found in the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia.¹¹ The sermons generally relied heavily on biblical metaphors and had a strong rhetorical focus on the idea of pollution and war, portraying the heretics as 'little foxes that endeavour to ruin the vineyard itself'.¹² As we shall see, this also to some extent resembles Henry's style.¹³

Similar research has been carried out on some of the northerly missionary chronicles of the eleventh, twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. This research, however, has not primarily been on the representations of missionary sermons in the various chronicles. Instead the focus has been on the underlying ideas of the chroniclers, on revealing their overall worldview. Especially important is the research of Volker Scior on Adam of Bremen (d. 1081/85), Helmold of Bosau (c. 1120–after 1177) and Arnold of Lübeck (c. 1150–1211/14). He explores the way in which a cultural and religious 'otherness' was perceived by these chroniclers, sharing some of the same ideas and conditions as Henry.¹⁴

Like all the other chroniclers mentioned above, Henry was very careful when composing his chronicle, emphasizing some occurrences and neglecting others, thereby bringing out what he believed to be the 'true story' of the conversion of the Livonian and Estonian people, as well as the supremacy of the Rigan church in this process. Unlike some of the other chroniclers, however, Henry definitely had a first-hand knowledge of quite a lot of the incidents described in the chronicle. Presumably Henry had access to most of the main actors

¹¹ Kienzle, *Cistercians, Heresy and Crusade*, pp. 137, 143.

¹² Kienzle, *Cistercians, Heresy and Crusade*, p. 150.

¹³ Regarding the vineyard motif in the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia, see Linda Kaljundi, 'Young Church in God's New Vineyard: The Motifs of Growth and Fertility in Henry's Chronicle of Livonia,' *Ennen ja nyt* 4 (2004), online at <<http://www.ennenjanyt.net/404/referee/kaljundi.pdf>>.

¹⁴ Volker Scior, *Das Eigene und das Fremde. Identität und Fremdheit in den Chroniken Adams von Bremen, Helmolds von Bosau und Arnolds von Lübeck* (Berlin, 2002); see also Volker Scior, 'Die Deutung von Vergangenheit und Gegenwart. Hochmittelalterliches Geschichtsbewusstsein Nördlich der Elbe,' in *Nordlichter. Geschichtsbewusstsein und Geschichtsmythen nördlich der Elbe*, ed. Bea Lundt (Cologne, 2004), pp. 137–58. For additional research into this topic, see the following articles and books: David Fraesdorff, *Der Barbarische Norden. Vorstellungen und Fremdkategorien bei Rimbart, Thietmar von Merseburg, Adam von Bremen und Helmold von Bosau* (Berlin, 2005); Hans-Dietrich Kahl, 'Die ersten Jahrhunderte des Missionsgeschichtlichen Mittelalters. Bausteine für eine Phänomenologie bis ca. 1050,' in *Kirchengeschichte als Missionsgeschichte*, vol. 2: *Die Kirche des Früheren Mittelalters*, ed. Knut Schäferdiek (Munich, 1978), pp. 11–76; *The Making of Christian Myths in the Periphery of Latin Christendom c. 1000–1300*, ed. Lars Boje Mortensen (Copenhagen, 2006).

within the Rigan church and might also have had access to written sources now lost. Something similar was probably the case with a chronicler like Helmold of Bosau, and also to a certain degree Arnold of Lübeck. Most importantly, however, when dealing with the way missionary sermons are presented in this particular chronicle, we know for a fact that Henry himself worked as a missionary engaged in preaching, as a parish priest among newly converted Christians, and as an interpreter called upon when negotiations (and sermons?) were carried out between officials of the Rigan church and the local people.¹⁵ However, not all the sermons found in Henry’s chronicle should be considered genuine representations of actual sermons; rather we have a chronicle whose author was a preacher himself, writing about genuine and reproduced sermons as they might have appeared at the time of writing of the chronicle and not in a distant future only remotely resembling that of the occurrences in the chronicle. Against this background, Henry’s chronicle is especially interesting with regards to the representation of missionary sermons.

Apostasy and the Use of Force in Henry’s Chronicle

The apostasy of the newly converted people of Livonia, and the ensuing attempts by the missionaries and crusaders to force them to return to Christianity, is essential in the overall composition of Henry’s chronicle. Therefore it is also a decisive element in the presentation of the various sermons in the chronicle, something that has to be considered when analysing the sermons.

When the Livs confronted Bishop Bertold in 1198, they rejected the bishop’s intentions to support his missionary work with a crusader army. Instead they argued that conversion had to be carried out ‘... with words, not with blows’ (*verbis non verberibus*).¹⁶ Even if this is a quotation by the Roman author Cicero, Henry is in fact referring to a long-standing debate within the medieval church with regards to the use of force in the processes of conversion, going as far back as to St Augustine (354–430). Augustine had argued strongly against the use of military force as a way of compelling people to accept Christianity. At the same time he allowed the use of force whenever former Christians lapsed back

¹⁵ Regarding the biography of Henry of Livonia, see Paul Johansen, ‘Die Chronik als Biographie: Heinrich von Lettlands Lebensgang und Weltanschauung’, *Jahrbucher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, n.s. 1 (1953), 1–24; Simon Gerber, ‘Heinrich von Lettland – Ein Theologe des Friedens. “Nichts Bessers weiss ich mir an Sonn- und Feiertagen, als ein Gespräch von Krieg und Kriegsgeschrei”’, *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 115 (2004), 1–18.

¹⁶ HCL II.5, p. 10; Brundage, p. 32.

into paganism (or became heretics).¹⁷ This viewpoint was generally accepted, if not entirely unopposed, among leading theologians and ecclesiastical leaders during the following centuries and received renewed attention because of the crusading movement in the high medieval period.¹⁸ As a part of his theological programme, Pope Innocent III addressed the issue during his pontificate, reaffirming the right of Christians to use force when missionaries and crusaders confronted apostates. Thereby the pope reintroduced this important theme to those clerics and crusaders who became the key actors in Livonia and Estonia in the early thirteenth century, Henry included.¹⁹

It is worth stressing that Henry already outlines the theme of apostasy in the opening chapter of his chronicle, thus legitimizing any use of force against all of those who would renounce their conversion to Christianity. Firstly, Henry reports that Bishop Meinhard was faced with apostasy from the beginning of his work in Livonia when the newly converted among the local people lapsed back into paganism.²⁰ Secondly, he describes how the pope, on hearing about the events in Livonia, decided to grant 'remission of sins (*remissionem indulget peccatorum*) to all those who should take the cross and arm themselves against the perfidious Livs'.²¹

Thirdly, it is told in the opening chapter of the chronicle that (some of) the Livs, in spite of a general apostasy (and maybe out of fear at the prospect of crusaders coming to attack them), begged Meinhard to arrange for a new bishop to come to Livonia when Meinhard himself was no longer among them, thus legitimizing the appointment of Bertold as new bishop following the death of Meinhard.²² In this way Henry sets up a sequence of events in which the coming of the new bishop, the summoning of the crusaders and the aspect of warfare in the future process of conversion are in accordance with papal policy and thus fully legitimized within the chronicle itself. This prepares the setting for presenting the verbal confrontations that would go along with the process of

¹⁷ Frederick H. Russell, 'Love and Hate in Medieval Warfare: The Contribution of Saint Augustine', *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 31 (1987), 108–24 (here 111).

¹⁸ Carsten Selch Jensen, "Gå ud på vejene og langs gårdene og nød dem til at komme, så mit hus kan blive fyldt". Pavernes holdning til tvangsomvendelser og mission i Baltikum omkring år 1200', in *Reformationer. Universitet – Kirkehistorie – Luther. Festskrift til Steffen Kjeldgaard-Pedersen 28. april 2006*, ed. T. Reeh and A. Vind (Copenhagen, 2006), pp. 185–200, esp. pp. 187–96. See also Kahl, 'Die ersten Jahrhunderte des Missionsgeschichtlichen Mittelalters', pp. 42–71.

¹⁹ Jensen, "Gå ud på vejene og langs gårdene og nød dem til at komme, så mit hus kan blive fyldt", p. 191. See also the Introduction by James A. Brundage in this volume.

²⁰ HCL I.6, p. 3.

²¹ HCL II.3, p. 9; Brundage, p. 32.

²² HCL I.14, p. 7.

conversion and Christianization. Thus the attempt by Henry to show how the use of force was a key element in the process of conversion in Livonia right from the beginning has to be seen as the natural context of the reproduced sermons found throughout the chronicle.²³ For the same reason we find in the chronicle that Henry connects warfare and preaching very closely, with one following the other. This becomes obvious when, for example, the pagans try in vain to silence the preaching of the Christian missionaries:

Neither by this nor by similar deeds could the enemy keep the Christian voices from preaching the Word of God; indeed through the increase of the faith they saw that in preaching and fighting (*preliando quam predicando*) they were daily growing stronger.²⁴

'He Took on the Burden of Preaching' – Portraying Clerics as Preachers in the Chronicle

The preacher is a central character in Henry's chronicle. Throughout the text the clerics and missionaries in Livonia are depicted as preachers eager to spread the word of God among the Livs and later also among the Estonians. As an example Henry mentions how Englebert, the provost of Riga in 1206, sent out priests to Treiden (Latv. Turaida) and Metsepole to the north and to Lennewarden (Latv. Lielvārde) south-east of Riga.²⁵ Even if it was the provost who sent out these clerical preachers to do their work among the Livs, it is stressed in the chronicle that he did so 'in the name of the archbishop' (*iuxta verbum archiepiscopi*), referring to the Danish archbishop of Lund, Anders Sunesen (r. 1201–23) who at that time was in Riga encouraging the clerics to keep up the good work.²⁶ Archbishop Anders Sunesen spent the entire winter in Riga preparing the clerics for future preaching campaigns:

After this, the archbishop, calling together all the clergy, gave instruction in theology, and, reading in the psalter, they spent the whole winter in divine

²³ With regards to the discussion whether or not the initial mission in Livonia accepted the use of force as an element in the process of Christianization, see Carsten Selch Jensen, 'The Nature of the Early Missionary Activities and Crusades in Livonia, 1185–1201', in *Medieval Spirituality in Scandinavia and Europe: A Collection of Essays in Honour of Tore Nyberg*, ed. Lars Bisgaard et al. (Odense, 2001), pp. 121–37.

²⁴ HCL IX.12, p. 31; Brundage, p. 52.

²⁵ HCL X.14, p. 44; Brundage, pp. 65–6.

²⁶ HCL X.14, p. 44; Brundage p. 65.

contemplation. And quite properly theological doctrine followed the wars, since at that same time, after all the above-mentioned wars, the whole of Livonia was converted and baptized.²⁷

Clearly it was important for Henry to point out that the preaching of the clerics was based on a sound and firm theological introduction and schooling by an archbishop who was renowned for his own theological skills. Anders Sunesen had studied theology in Paris, Bologna and also in England, before returning to Paris in around 1193 and becoming a teacher of theology himself. As Danish archbishop, and later also appointed papal legate, Anders Sunesen was deeply involved in the Baltic crusades, taking an active part in several campaigns in the region, as well as overseeing the theological education of the clerics involved in the missionary work in Livonia and Estonia.²⁸

Inspired by the theological lectures of Anders Sunesen, the clerics of the church of Riga were prepared to resume their work in the early spring of 1207, as mentioned by Henry, describing how priests were dispatched throughout Livonia to preach, baptize and erect churches, and thus allegedly completing the conversion of all of Livonia.²⁹

On a previous occasion, Henry also made a hint about the theological training of one of the clerics active in the preaching among the Livs. When writing about the martyrdom of a priest called Johannes living near Holme, Henry tells us that this particular priest originally came from the Estonian province of Vironia (Ger. Wierland, Est. Virumaa). As a boy, he had been taken captive by another pagan tribe but was then ransomed and later converted by Bishop Meinhard. The bishop had then sent the boy to the monastery of Segeberg where he had been 'educated in the sacred learning' (*sacris litteris imbueretur*), preparing him for the intended missionary work among the Livs that would eventually lead to his martyrdom.³⁰ Henry does not go into any details with regards to the exact contents of the *sacris litteris*, but one can assume that it must have been a very basic introduction to the biblical as well as liturgical texts needed by a future priest when administering the sacraments and caring for the spiritual well-being of new converts among the Livs.

²⁷ HCL X.13, p. 43; Brundage, pp. 64–5.

²⁸ Torben K. Nielsen, 'The Missionary Man: Archbishop Anders Sunesen and the Baltic Crusade, 1206–21', in CCBF, pp. 95–117, esp. p. 106. See also Torben K. Nielsen, 'Anders Sunesen', in *The Crusades: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Alan V. Murray, 4 vols (Santa Barbara, 2006), vol. 1, p. 61.

²⁹ HCL X.13, p. 43; Brundage, p. 65.

³⁰ HCL X.7, p. 37; Brundage, p. 58.

Not much else in the chronicle is said about the theological education of the various clerics who took part in the process of conversion in Livonia and Estonia. Henry does, however, mention if the clerics belonged to one of the monastic orders involved in the missionary work in Livonia and Estonia, for example, the Cistercians. One of these Cistercian monks mentioned in the chronicle is the former count Bernard of Lippe (c. 1140–1224) who, in the words of Henry, ‘had taken part in many wars, burnings, and assaults’ when he was still in his home country in Saxony.³¹ Due to this apparently godforsaken life, the count was punished by God who crippled him so that he could no longer walk on his feet. Bernard of Lippe repented and was admitted into the Cistercian order:

[And] after learning letters and religion for some years, he received authority from the lord Pope to preach the Word of God and to come to Livonia. As he often told it, after accepting the cross to go to the land of the Blessed Virgin, his limbs were immediately made firm and his feet became sound. On his first arrival in Livonia he was consecrated as abbot at Dünamünde and afterwards was made bishop of the Semgalls.³²

In this case ‘learning letters and religion’ seems to have been part of the quasi-theological preparation of Bernard of Lippe to become a missionary, abbot and later a bishop in Livonia. For obvious reasons these doctrinal teachings were important when striving to convert people to Christianity, and the chronicle has several references to sermons with clear-cut doctrinal or catechetical themes. Later in this chapter, the various aspects of Christianity touched upon in these sermons will be examined.

³¹ HCL XV.4, p. 92; Brundage, p. 113. Bernd Ulrich Hucker, ‘Liv- und estländische Königspläne’, in *Studien über die Anfänge der Mission in Livland*, ed. Manfred Hellmann (Sigmaringen, 1989), pp. 65–106; Bernd Ulrich Hucker, ‘“Fürst aller Christen Livlands”. Bernhard II. und sein Sohn Hermann zur Lippe’, in *Lippe und Livland. Mittelalterliche Herrschaftsbildung im Zeichen der Rose*, ed. Jutta Prieur (Bielefeld, 2008), pp. 169–84, esp. pp. 171–2; Wolfgang Bender, ‘Bernhard II. zur Lippe und die Mission in Livland’, in *Lippe und Livland*, pp. 135–68. Both Hucker (2008) and Bender refer to a change in means with regards to the early missionary activities in Livonia, seemingly supporting the notion of an early peaceful mission that was replaced by a so-called ‘*Schwertmission*’ (for example, Bender, p. 156), when Bishop Bertold brought with him an army of crusaders in 1198. I do not agree with this interpretation of the sources. Meinhard did have armed men in his entourage, and on one occasion at least he threatened the Livs that he would summon an army of crusaders if they kept opposing him as Bishop; for a lengthy discussion, see Jensen, ‘The Nature of the Early Missionary Activities’, pp. 121–37.

³² HCL XV.4, p. 92; Brundage, p. 113.

An important aspect introduced by Henry through the sermons represented in the chronicle is the conflict that evolved between the German clerics sent out from the church of Riga and the Danish missionaries and clerics who eventually engaged themselves in the conversion of the Estonian people in the northern provinces. Both parties laid claim to the Estonian provinces, with the Rigans stating that 'this vineyard had been planted by the zeal of the pilgrims and the labor of the Rigans through the Blessed Virgin's banner' and therefore rightly belonged to them, whereas the Danes argued that 'all of Estonia, whether conquered by the Rigans or not yet subjugated, belonged to the Danish king, having been made over to him by the bishops of Riga'.³³ Furthermore the Danish archbishop had sent word to Riga ordering the Germans 'not to pluck the hanging clusters of grapes, nor to send their priests to preach in the corners of Estonia'.³⁴ For the Estonians this fight for supremacy by two overwhelming and conquering parties must have put them in a rather awkward situation, not least with regards to their swaying between paganism and Christianity and between one or the other Christian parties (either the German or the Danish). And quite clearly this was not only a matter of taste or preference with regards to ecclesiastical (or worldly) suzerainty but rather a question of life and death for the Estonians. Henry states that among those baptized by the German missionaries (counting also Henry himself) was one of the Estonian elders from Vironia by the name of Tabelin 'who was later hanged by the Danes because he had received baptism from the Rigans and had placed his son as a hostage with the Brothers of the Militia'.³⁵ And Henry goes on to say that:

[the] rest of the Wierlanders from the other provinces dared not receive the Rigan priests because of the threats of the Danes, but summoned the Danes, as they were so near, and they were baptized by them. The Wierlanders believed that the Christians had one God, both for the Danes and the Germans, and one faith and one baptism. They thought that no discord would come of it and so they accepted, unconcernedly, the baptism of their Danish neighbours.³⁶

In this text Henry makes the Estonian people from Vironia quote St Paul's letter to the Ephesians, chapter four, verse five, on the Christians having but 'one Lord, one faith and one baptism'.³⁷ One cannot help wondering if some of the Estonians

³³ HCL XXIV.2, p. 170; Brundage, p. 189.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ HCL XXIV.1, p. 170; Brundage, p. 188.

³⁶ HCL XXIV.1, p. 170; Brundage, pp. 188–9.

³⁷ Quotation from *The Bible: Authorized Version*, ed. John Stirling (Oxford, 1967), p. 199; HCL XXIV.1, p. 170.

might have got the idea that there were actually two competing Christian gods – one for the Danes and one for the Germans! That would fit very well with their own ancient beliefs in which each people had their own (local) gods who cared especially for them and helped them overcome their enemies.³⁸

Direct references to the theological training of the clerics and missionaries is rather sparse in the chronicle, both with regards to the lesser clerics and the abbots and bishops mentioned in the text. Still, Henry of Livonia has much to say about the preaching qualities of those involved in the missionary work in Livonia and he is very careful in his presentation of several of the main characters as gifted and favoured preachers.

The first of these brought to our attention is Meinhard, who was the first named missionary among the Livs and eventually also became the first bishop of Livonia. In the opening chapters of the chronicle he is described primarily as a preacher; thus it is said in the second paragraph of the first chapter that:

In the monastery of Segeberg there was a man of worthy life, and with venerable grey hair, Meinhard by name, a priest of the Order of Saint Augustine. He came to Livonia with a band of merchants simply for the sake of Christ and only to preach.³⁹

Henry goes on to describe Meinhard's preaching as a 'divine work' (*divinum opus*) and refers to him simply as 'the ... preacher' (*predicator*).⁴⁰ When saddened by the evilness of the pagans and the newly converted, it is said that 'the soul of

³⁸ Kahl, 'Die ersten Jahrhunderte des missionsgeschichtlichen Mittelalters', p. 30. Concerning the religious beliefs of the Estonians and the Livs, see Heiki Valk, 'Christianisation in Estonia: A Process of Dual-Faith and Syncretism', in *The Cross Goes North: Processes of Conversion in Northern Europe, AD 300–1300*, ed. Martin Carver (York, 2003), pp. 571–80 (here 572–3); Heiki Valk, 'Christianization and Changes in Faith in the Burial Traditions of Estonia in the 11th–17th Centuries AD', in *Rom und Byzanz im Norden: Mission und Glaubenswechsel im Ostseeraum während des 8.–14. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Michael Müller-Wille, 2 vols (Stuttgart, 1998), vol. 2, pp. 37–56; Anzelm Weiss, 'Mythologie und Religiosität der alten Liven', in *Gli inizi del cristianesimo in Livonia-Lettonia*, ed. Michele Maccarrone (Vatican City, 1989), pp. 81–96.

³⁹ HCL I.2, p. 2; Brundage, pp. 15–16. Arbusow and Bauer suggest that Henry's description of Meinhard in these opening paragraphs was inspired by liturgical texts and older *vitae*, thus placing Meinhard in the company of renowned preachers and missionaries: HCL, p. 2, notes 3 and 4. Regarding the overall use of liturgical texts in Henry's chronicle, see Leonid Arbusow, *Liturgie und Geschichtsschreibung im Mittelalter* (Bonn, 1951), esp. pp. 42–86.

⁴⁰ HCL I.3, p. 2; I.5, p. 3; Brundage p. 26.

the preacher was disturbed', referring of course again to Meinhard.⁴¹ And when referring to the continued work of preaching by Meinhard, Henry presents his fellow preacher and the future bishop of Estonia, Theodoric (r. 1211–19), as his 'co-worker in the gospel', placing both of them in the biblical tradition of preachers and co-workers in Christ as the ideal propagators of Christianity.⁴²

Henry is not the only one who indicates that Meinhard was a skilled preacher. In *Chronica Slavorum* ('Chronicle of the Slavs') by Arnold of Lübeck (presumably finished around 1210), Meinhard is presented as a man so greatly inspired by the word of God that he was eager to preach 'the peace of God' (*pacem Domini*) to the pagans in Livonia, thereby introducing them to the Christian faith.⁴³ From Arnold of Lübeck we also learn that Meinhard had for quite some time been visiting Livonia on an annual basis, accompanying German merchants who went there to trade with the local people. Eventually he decided to dedicate himself more permanently to the missionary work in the region. In this he was supported and backed by Archbishop Hartvig of Hamburg-Bremen (r. 1185–90/92 and 1194–1207), who wanted Meinhard to go and 'preach to the pagans' (*ad predicandum gentibus*) and eventually appointed him bishop of the Livonians.⁴⁴

From *Chronica Slavorum* we also learn about another of Meinhard's co-workers committing himself in a similar way to the missionary work among the pagans in Livonia.⁴⁵ This is the above-mentioned Bertold, who would succeed Meinhard as bishop of Livonia. Like several of the other missionaries (for example, the aforementioned Bernard of Lippe and Theodoric), Bertold also belonged to the order of the Cistercians and he was an abbot of the Cistercian monastery of Loccum when he became bishop in 1196 or 1197.⁴⁶ In the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia we have a detailed description of the appointment of Bishop Bertold. Henry states that Bertold, on hearing of his appointment, revealed himself as a humble and modest man – thus faithful

⁴¹ HCL I.9, p. 4; Brundage, p. 27.

⁴² HCL I.10 p. 4; Brundage p. 27. Regarding Theodoric, see Benno Åbers, 'Zur päpstlichen Missionspolitik in Lettland und Estland zur Zeit Innocenz' III', *Commentationes Balticae* IV/V (1958), 3–18, esp. 11–18; Bernd Ulrich Hucker, 'Der Zisterzienserabt Bertold, Bischof von Livland, und der erste Livlandskreuzzug', in *Studien über die Anfänge der Mission in Livland*, pp. 39–64, esp. pp. 54–7; Manfred Hellmann, 'Die Anfänge christlicher Mission in den baltischen Ländern', in *Studien über die Anfänge der Mission in Livland*, ed. Manfred Hellmann (Sigmaringen, 1989), pp. 7–38, esp. pp. 23 and 29.

⁴³ Arnold of Lübeck, *Chronica Slavorum*, ed. I.M. Lappenberg (Hanover, 1868), p. 213.

⁴⁴ Arnold of Lübeck, *Chronica Slavorum*, p. 213.

⁴⁵ Arnold of Lübeck, *Chronica Slavorum*, p. 214.

⁴⁶ HCL II.1, p. 8.

towards the traditions of the church, he first humbly refused to accept the appointment as a bishop but then, according to Henry, ‘overcome by the prayers of the metropolitan, he took on the burden of preaching’.⁴⁷ As mentioned in the opening section of this chapter, Henry reports one important incident in which Bishop Bertold confronted (or rather was confronted by) the Livs in an exchange of words following the introduction of crusaders into Livonia. One can argue that this is not a sermon in its strictest sense, even if Bishop Bertold accordingly blamed the Livs for turning their backs on Christianity, making themselves liable to severe punishment by the crusaders due to their apostasy. Furthermore, as Bishop Bertold was killed shortly after this verbal confrontation had taken place, we do not find any other example in the chronicle of his abilities as a preacher. But as in the case of Bishop Meinhard, Arnold of Lübeck also describes Bertold as a highly skilled preacher, much loved by all those who met him and heard him. Bertold even gave up his vocation as an abbot and instead engaged himself in the missionary work in Livonia as part of the entourage of Bishop Meinhard – that at least is the impression given by the writings of Arnold of Lübeck, who also states that Bertold’s preaching had a profound impact on the Saxon noblemen volunteering for the first crusade against the Livs, as described at the beginning of this article.⁴⁸

Turning to the very final chapters of the chronicle, Henry once more portrays the ideal preacher devoted to the preaching of the word of God among the newly baptized people in Livonia and Estonia. This is the detailed description of the pastoral commitment of the papal legate, William of Modena, during his visit to the region in 1225.⁴⁹ William of Modena undertook several trips to the region as papal legate and eventually helped the Dominican Order to settle in the Baltic countries. This might be seen as a testimony to his pastoral commitment, something also described by Henry. The chronicle gives an extensive report of the journeys of the papal legate and Henry seems especially concerned with William’s preaching during the meetings with the local Christians (both converts and newcomers from the West), admonishing all of them to keep to the word of God. The legate especially addresses converts, warning them not to return to their old pagan rites and:

⁴⁷ HCL II.1, p. 8; Brundage, p. 31.

⁴⁸ Arnold of Lübeck, *Chronica Slavorum*, p. 214.

⁴⁹ For more information on William of Modena, see Gustav Adolf Donner, *Kardinal Wilhelm von Sabina, Bischof von Modena, 1222–1234: Päpstlicher Legat in den nordischen Ländern* (Helsinki, 1929); Anti Selart, ‘William of Modena’, in *The Crusades: An Encyclopedia*, vol. 4, p. 1280.

[he] blessed the Lord because he found a [congregation] of the faithful in Esthonia. He admonished the Esthonians, by instructing them in the faith of Jesus Christ, and the Germans, by exhorting them faithfully. They were to live together in a friendly way, they were not to stir up evil for each other, the Germans were not to impose any harsh, unbearable burden upon the shoulders of the converts, but rather the sweet and light yoke of the Lord (*iugum Domini leve ac suave*), and they were always to teach the sacraments of the faith (*fideique semper docerent sacramenta*).⁵⁰

And a few lines further down, Henry continues his description of this ideal preacher and pastor:

[William] summoned the Esthonians, both men and women, into their churches and went to them. He admonished them by faithfully ministering the word of exhortation henceforth not to presume to do such evil or to violate the sacraments of the faith. The devout man likewise impressed the warnings of sacred doctrine (*doctrine sancta*) upon the Brothers of the Militia there. He taught them that they should not be harsh to their subjects, these [simple] Esthonians, either in taking the tithes or in any other matter whatever, lest through such conditions they should again be forced to return to paganism.⁵¹

Both the newly converted and the German Christians are addressed in these sermons as depicted by Henry of Livonia, taking great care to portray the long campaigns of fighting and preaching that had been going on in the region for the past three or four decades as having ultimately been successful. As such, the description of the visit by the papal legate is a long anticipated culmination of the process of preaching among the pagan people of Livonia and Estonia. In the chronicle this process of conversion is brought to an end within the final pages when describing the conquest of the island of Ösel (Est. Saaremaa) and the proclaimed baptism of all the islanders.

In the description of preachers and their theological learning in Henry's chronicle, there is one character who has been omitted so far and that is Bishop Albert. Following the unexpected and violent death of Bishop Bertold, Albert was appointed new bishop of Livonia in 1199.⁵² When reading through the chronicle, Albert springs to mind as *the* central character in the chronicle with

⁵⁰ HCL XXIX.3, p. 209; Brundage, pp. 230–31.

⁵¹ HCL XXIX.3, pp. 209–10; Brundage, p. 231.

⁵² HCL III.1, p. 12. On Albert, see Giesela Gnegel-Waitschies, *Bishop Albert von Riga. Ein Bremer Domherr als Kirchenfürst im Osten (1199–1229)* (Hamburg, 1958); Carsten Selch Jensen, 'Urban Life and the Crusades in Northern Germany and the Baltic Lands in the

the description of the ongoing process of Christianization and colonization in the region. Albert became the founder of the town of Riga in 1201 and as such he became the first bishop *of* Riga.⁵³ He might also have initiated the founding of the order of the Sword Brethren in 1202 even if this is highly debated among scholars. The Sword Brethren were a knightly order heavily involved in the military campaigns and ongoing crusades in the region during the episcopacy of Bishop Albert.⁵⁴ Albert also established several ecclesiastical institutions within Riga and in the vicinity of the town, as well as installing knightly vassals in the region to control the newly conquered and converted lands. Furthermore, Albert spent a considerable amount of his time travelling to Saxony summoning crusaders for the ongoing crusades in the region, as well as meeting up with prominent ecclesiastical and secular rulers to make arrangements for the ongoing missionary work – this did not, however, eliminate the above-mentioned conflict between German and Danish missionaries in the region. Yet as a preacher, Albert seems, at first glance, somehow set aside compared to some of the other clerics and preachers in the chronicle that have been mentioned so far – he is not first and foremost portrayed by Henry as a preacher who confronts pagans, converts and apostates in sermons like his predecessors did. Seemingly he was rather preoccupied with the overall duties of ruling his bishopric and, of course, the arranging of annual crusades in the region as described above. This view of Albert as a skilled organizer and logistical genius is again supported by Arnold of Lübeck in his *Chronica Slavorum*. Arnold praises the youthful Albert for being well connected with a range of prominent persons in Germany, all of whom are very supportive of him during his initial years as bishop.⁵⁵

However, if we take a closer look at Henry’s chronicle, it becomes obvious that Bishop Albert also has to be seen as a preacher and propagator of the word of God within the narrative frame of this missionary chronicle. When the Russian prince of Polotsk complained about some Livs at Gerzike who had

Early Thirteenth Century’, in CCBF, pp. 75–94; Jensen, ‘The Nature of the Early Missionary Activities’, pp. 133–6.

⁵³ Bernhart Jähniß, ‘Die Anfänge der Sakraltopographie von Riga’, in *Studien über die Anfänge der Mission in Livland*, pp. 123–58.

⁵⁴ Friederich Benninghoven, *Der Orden der Schwerbrüder. Fratres milicie Christi de Livonia* (Cologne, 1965); Sven Ekdahl, ‘Die Rolle der Ritterorden bei der Christianisierung der Liven und Letten’, in *Gli inizi del cristianesimo in Livonia-Lettonia*, pp. 203–43; John Lind, ‘Sword Brethren’, in *The Crusades: An Encyclopedia*, vol. 4, pp. 1130–34; Bender, ‘Bernhard II. zur Lippe und die Mission in Livland’, pp. 157–60.

⁵⁵ Arnold of Lübeck, *Chronica Slavorum*, pp. 215–16.

accepted baptism from the German clerics of Riga, Bishop Albert refused the complaints of the prince, arguing instead that he, as a bishop:

[had to] obey God rather than men, the heavenly King rather than an earthly king, as He commands in His gospel, saying: 'Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit'. He steadfastly affirmed, therefore, that he would not quit what he had begun, nor would he neglect the duty of preaching (*predicationis officium*), which had been enjoined upon him by the supreme pontiff.⁵⁶

Apart from citing the missionary command in Matthew 28:19, Henry of Livonia explicitly refers to the 'duty of preaching' that had been imposed on Albert by the pope.⁵⁷ This fits in with a previous remark in the chronicle in which Henry explains that the bishop had been granted permission by Pope Innocent III to summon clerics and monks from various dioceses and monasteries to the missionary work among the pagans in Livonia and Estonia.⁵⁸ Thus it might be that Bishop Albert was not first and foremost a preacher to be found in the forefront of the pastoral work in Livonia and Estonia; rather he was the spiritual leader delegating the 'duty of preaching' to his fellow clerics and missionaries. On the other hand, Henry is quite explicit about the bishop being a skilled preacher when summoning crusaders back in Saxony, as stated in this example from 1208:

[Bishop Albert] then went to Germany to arrange for various matters of the church, that is, to collect both pilgrims and goods to help the still-new and very indigent church. In going about and preaching in many places he endured many hardships.⁵⁹

Quite clearly the bishop did not spare himself when it came to the summoning of the annual crusaders through his sermons.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ HCL XVI.2, p. 103; Brundage, p. 122; Bender, 'Bernhard II. zur Lippe und die Mission in Livland', p. 156.

⁵⁷ This seems to resemble the notion of preaching among the Cistercians in Southern France when facing the heretics. They considered the preaching to be a 'business of the faith and peace (*negotium fidei et pacis*)' that had to be carried out regardless of the costs; see Kienzle, *Cistercians, Heresy and Crusade*, pp. 137 and 143.

⁵⁸ HCL IX.6, pp. 28–9. Arnold of Lübeck has a similar reference in his chronicle, *Chronica Slavorum*, pp. 215–16.

⁵⁹ HL XII.1, p. 58; Brundage p. 78. This is but one of many examples in the chronicle mentioning Bishop Albert's frequent trips to Germany, summoning new crusaders and pilgrims for Livonia and Estonia.

⁶⁰ Bender, 'Bernhard II. zur Lippe und die Mission in Livland', p. 156.

The Contents of the Sermons – Some Examples from the Chronicle

The theological teachings of the archbishop and papal legate Anders Sunesen in the winter of 1206/07 was followed by renewed missionary efforts when priests were sent all over Livonia to complete the conversion of the Livs. Years later it was the Estonian provinces that became the main target of the clerical preaching. Henry describes how Bishop Albert sent preachers into Estonia because of his ‘ever-anxious care for all the churches’.⁶¹ Several of the clerics are mentioned by name in the chronicle including Henry himself, who worked together with a Finnish priest by the name of Peter Kakuwalde:

Starting from the river they sowed the seed of Christian doctrine and watered the villages lying round about from the holy font of regeneration. After they had celebrated the holy mysteries of baptism in Lovecote and the other villages, they went on to Sadegerwe and, having gathered the people there, they baptized about three hundred. After this they went around to the other villages and did likewise. They came to Waiga, instructed the men of that province in the holy mysteries, and baptized them all. At length in Riale, the furthest of their forts, they gathered the men and imparted the doctrine of the gospel to them. After baptizing five hundred of both sexes there, they went into Wierland.⁶²

In this text Henry mentions ‘the seed of Christian doctrine’, ‘the holy mysteries’ and ‘the doctrine of the gospel’, referring rather sketchily to the contents of these missionary sermons. From other examples in the chronicle we do get a more detailed insight into the main components and most important themes of these sermons as described by Henry. As pointed out earlier in this chapter, Henry was not just a theoretical observer with regards to the preaching to non-Christian people. It is clear from the chronicle that he himself became a seasoned preacher and parish priest among pagans and newly converted Christians, thus revealing a first-hand knowledge of the content of actual missionary sermons.

A common feature in the sermons and in the confrontation between Christians and pagans in general in Henry’s chronicle is the rejection by the missionaries of pagan polytheism. Henry offers one such example when describing how a priest by the name of Daniel labelled the former Liv pagan gods as ‘an illusion of the devil’ and ‘an illusion of the demons’.⁶³ And not only are they evil illusions, they are also incapable of truly supporting and guarding their worshippers among

⁶¹ HCL XXIV.1, p. 169; Brundage, p. 187.

⁶² HCL XXIV.1, p. 169; Brundage, p. 188.

⁶³ HCL X.14, p. 45; Brundage, p. 66.

the Liv people in their fight with the Christians. Instead Daniel 'preached that there was one God, creator of all, one faith, and one baptism, and in these and similar ways invited them to the worship of the one God'.⁶⁴ Similar incidents are described in the chronicle during the missionary efforts among the Estonians, emphasizing just how powerless their false gods were in the struggle against the Christian God, encouraging the pagans to accept the Christian faith. During one such incident, the Christian God is referred to as the 'good God', with the pagan god being 'the bad god'.⁶⁵ Unlike the pagan gods the Christian God is portrayed in the chronicle as anything but lame and impotent: He is the one who controls events by summoning Christian preachers and crusaders, granting them victories in their fights against the pagans and upholding the Christian church in spite of the raging of the pagans and their devilish gods.⁶⁶ According to Henry the pagan gods were deemed to lose this confrontation with the Christian God. This is portrayed in the chronicle whenever pagans recognized their spiritual powerlessness, as happened during the first German siege of the Estonian castle of Fellin (Est. Viljandi) in Saccala (Est. Sakala) in 1211. At first the Estonians seemingly had great confidence in their own gods, believing that they would grant them power to rebuff the besieging armies: 'The pagans would listen to nothing about God or the Christian name'.⁶⁷ This stubbornness, however, would not last long according to Henry. The German army, together with their allied Letts and Livs, soon overcame the initial Estonian defences and therefore on the sixth day of the siege sent word to the remaining Estonians within the crumbling walls of the castle:

'Do you still resist and refuse to acknowledge our Creator?' To this they replied: 'We acknowledge your God to be greater than our gods. By overcoming us, He has inclined our hearts to worship Him. We beg, therefore, that you spare us and mercifully impose the yoke of Christianity upon us as you have upon the Livonians and Letts.' The Germans, therefore, after calling the elders out of the fort, disclosed to them all the laws of Christianity and promised them peace and brotherly love.⁶⁸

First of all, the Estonians acknowledged that the Christian God was stronger than their own lesser pagans gods, similarly to the incident mentioned above in which Daniel rejected the Livonian pagan deities on the same grounds.

⁶⁴ HCL X.14, p. 45; Brundage, p. 66.

⁶⁵ HCL XXIII.7, p. 161; Brundage, p. 179.

⁶⁶ For an example, see HCL XII.6, pp. 63–5.

⁶⁷ HCL XIV.11, p. 84; Brundage, p. 105.

⁶⁸ HCL XIV.11, p. 85; Brundage, pp. 106–7.

Furthermore, the Estonians begged their conquerors to impose upon them 'the yoke of Christianity' (*iugum christianitatis*) as had previously been done upon the Livs and Letts now siding with the victorious Germans – only in this way would they obtain peace with the Germans as stated in the text, also referring to the 'laws of Christianity' (*iura christianitatis*) as their new guidelines in life. Thus we have in this particular text three key words essential to the reproduced sermons: 'peace', 'yoke' and 'law'. They will in turn be analysed further in the following paragraphs.

First we turn to the notion of 'peace' in the sermons. Henry claims that true peace would only be obtained through submission to the Christian belief, with new believers thereby also accepting the laws of Christianity. This is further emphasized in the chronicle when Henry equates true peace with Christ himself: 'If you wish a true peace, it will be necessary that you be made sons of the true Peacemaker, who is Christ, so that, after receiving His baptism, you may attain our eternal friendship.'⁶⁹

Citing both biblical and liturgical texts, Henry is even more explicit later in the chronicle when repeating his description of true peace as something only obtainable through conversion:

'Do you people, who have so often disturbed our peace with your wars, want peace now? No peace will be given you – except the peace of that true Peacemaker; Who has made both one, joining and pacifying heaven and earth; Who, the King desired by all the nations, descended from heaven, their hope, their Saviour; Who commanded His disciples, saying, "Go, teach all nations, baptizing them". If, therefore, you wish to be baptized and to worship with us the one God of the Christians, we will give you that true peace which He gave to us, which He left to His worshippers when He ascended, and we will receive you forever into the company of our brotherhood.' This speech pleased them and they promised at once that they would faithfully accept all the laws of Christianity and the Rigan baptism.⁷⁰

Thus in a similar way, 'to preach Christ' according to Henry is to offer the true peace to the pagans through conversion.⁷¹ For the same reason, this peace could not be equalled with a worldly peace that came from abstaining from war. During the initial attempt to Christianize the Estonians, Henry describes one of

⁶⁹ HCL XX.6, p. 138; Brundage, p. 158.

⁷⁰ HCL XXIII.7, pp. 160–61; Brundage, pp. 178–9.

⁷¹ See, for example, HCL XXX.5, p. 220; Brundage, p. 245.

many battles in which an Estonian army laid siege to a Latvian castle. Sometime during the siege the newly converted Letts started rejoicing:

[The Estonians] ... stopped fighting and inquired about the cause of such rejoicing. The Letts replied that they were rejoicing and praising the Lord because they saw that God was defending them for their recent acceptance of baptism. Then the Esthonians made a proposal concerning a renewal of the peace. But the Letts said: 'You have not yet restored the goods stolen from the Germans and also the things often stolen from us. Neither can there be one heart and soul nor a firm treaty of peace between Christians and pagans unless you accept with us the same yoke of Christianity and of perpetual peace and serve the one God.' The Esthonians were exceedingly angry and turned away from the fort.⁷²

Thus according to Henry, the Estonians would not obtain peace merely by agreeing on a ceasefire. Not even the returning of stolen goods would establish true peace – only the acceptance of the above-mentioned 'yoke of Christianity' would bring them the true peace.

This idea of a 'yoke of Christianity' is encountered several times in Henry's chronicle of Livonia, though often in slightly altered forms such as the 'the yoke of the faith' (*iugum fidei*) and 'the yoke of the Lord' (*iugum Domini*).⁷³ The mentioning of this yoke of Christianity is of course a reference to Matthew 11:30, also found in the chronicle more or less as a direct quotation:

The Blessed Virgin does not, indeed, delight in the great tribute which converts are accustomed to give, nor is She appeased by the money taken from them by various exactions, nor does She wish to impose upon them a heavy burden, but one which is sweet and easily borne. Her Son says: 'My yoke is sweet and My burden light' (*Iugum meum suave est et onus meum leve*). He simply demands of them that they believe in His name, that they acknowledge Him to be the one true God with the Father, and, believing, may have life in His name, who is blessed world without end.⁷⁴

And the paragraph then ends with an appropriate 'Amen'. Thus true peace according to Henry is obtained only when the pagans (or the apostates) submit to the yoke of Christ – converting to Christianity, that is.

⁷² HCL XII.6, pp. 63–4; Brundage, p. 85.

⁷³ For example, see HCL IX.13, p. 32 (*iugum Domini*) and X.1, p. 33 (*iugum fidei*).

⁷⁴ HCL XXV.2, p. 181; Brundage, p. 200.

It would, however, be foolish to think that the acceptance of Christianity among the Baltic people was only a matter of religious beliefs and pure theology. There are other yokes to be found in Henry’s chronicle apart from the ‘yoke of the Lord’, ‘the yoke of Christianity’ and ‘the yoke of the faith’. When Henry describes an uprising among the northern tribes, he mentions another yoke:

Not only did the Oeselians and the people of Harrien come, but even the Saccalians, who had already been baptized. The latter hoped thereby to throw off both the yoke of the Germans (*iugum Theuthonicorum*) and their baptism.⁷⁵

And on a previous occasion Henry also refers to the ‘the yoke of the Danes’ (*iugum Danorum*) and ‘the yoke of the Russians’ (*iugo Ruthenorum*).⁷⁶ Neither of them are to be paralleled with the above-mentioned ‘yoke of the lord’ or ‘the yoke of the faith’, even if the essence is on lordship and submission. Worldly submission would, according to Henry, only impose the yoke of a temporal power like the Danes, the Russians or the Germans, whereas the yoke of the Lord, first and foremost, required submission to God – that is, the acceptance of Christianity.

Thus the yoke of the Lord might have been different from the yoke of the Russian, Danish and German secular lords, but it is quite obvious that Henry believed that by accepting Christianity the former pagans also accepted the supremacy of a worldly authority – in this case, predominately the Rigan church, emphasizing through the staged sermons that the only Christian beliefs fully accepted by Henry were those of the Roman church, preferably mediated through the German clerics from Riga, thus explaining the proclamation ‘that they would faithfully accept all the laws of Christianity and the Rigan baptism.’⁷⁷ This quite clearly reveals the struggle between competing institutional and national churches in the region; first and foremost the Orthodox Russians, but also the competing clerics from the Danish church. Henry deals with the Russians on several occasions and his suspicion of them is obvious, as becomes clear from the following sequence in the chronicle describing Russian and German priests baptizing the same group of people. In the chronicle Henry states that the Russians had offered peace to some of the southernmost Estonians and then also ‘baptized a few of them with their baptism.’⁷⁸ Obviously this happened according to the rite of the Orthodox church. The Estonians then paid taxes to the Russians until German clerics entered the scene and made the Estonians

⁷⁵ HCL XX.7, p. 139; Brundage, pp. 158–9.

⁷⁶ HCL XXVI.4, pp. 188–9; XVI.2, p. 103.

⁷⁷ HCL XXIII.7, pp. 160–61; Brundage, pp. 178–9.

⁷⁸ HCL XIV.2, p. 74.

accept baptism once more – this time according to the rites of the Roman church, thereby incorporating these double-baptized Estonians into the Rigan (and that is the *Roman*) church.⁷⁹ Something similar (but even more grotesque) happened when Danish and German missionaries were competing over the same un-baptized Estonians in the southern provinces of Estonia, threatening and apparently also killing those among the Estonians who had the misfortune of (mistakenly) accepting baptism from the wrong party – not too surprisingly, it is the Danes who are depicted by Henry as the villains in this sequence of the chronicle.⁸⁰

Both the Danish and Russian attempts to convert and subdue the Estonians are taunted by Henry in the chronicle – the Russians even more so than the Danes because of their schismatic beliefs – when he compares the Estonians and the new converts among them with a weak infant and daughter still in need of a mother:

Many mothers, indeed, claimed this daughter falsely and always drew her to them by their lies. One of these was the Russian mother, always sterile and barren, for she always attempted to subject lands to herself, not with the hope of regeneration in the faith of Jesus Christ, but with the hope of loot and tribute.⁸¹

In Henry's mind the Russian church quite clearly was not capable of taking care of those among the Estonians who might have been inclined to accept the orthodox baptism if it had been offered to them, but only thought of loot and tribute. He also reports one incident in which even the pagan gods seem to favour the Roman church in Riga instead of the Russians, when some of the Letts cast lots, asking their pagans gods whether they '... should submit to the baptism of the Russians of Pskov or ... to that of the Latins'. And Henry states that 'the lot fell to the Latins'.⁸²

This conflict between the Germans in Riga, the Danes in northern Estonia and the Russian church is of course very much a conflict of suzerainty, in which the various ecclesiastical and secular parties seek to gain overall control of a particular region. I believe, however, that this conflict as portrayed in Henry's chronicle also relates to a very important aspect of the reform programme of Pope Innocent III. He had a tremendous impact on the overall understanding of the crusades in the early thirteenth century including the crusades in Livonia

⁷⁹ The treatment of the Russians in Henry's chronicle is analysed in the excellent book by Anti Selart, *Livland und die Rus' im 13. Jahrhundert* (Cologne, 2007), esp. pp. 78–122.

⁸⁰ HCL XXIV.1, p. 170; Brundage, p. 188.

⁸¹ HCL XXVIII.4; p. 202; Brundage, p. 222.

⁸² HCL XI.7, p. 55; Brundage, p. 75.

and Estonia.⁸³ And not only did Pope Innocent III integrate these holy wars into his efforts to reform the religious life of the Christians, but he also emphasized obedience to Rome and the pope as a hallmark of a proper Christian belief. According to Innocent no one could claim to be a true Christian if he did not submit himself to the will of the pope.⁸⁴ Henry's narrative reflects this demand for obedience to Rome inasmuch as Henry regards the church of Riga as the true representative of the Roman church in Livonia and Estonia. True peace is thus only obtained by submitting to the yoke of the Rigan church. This perspective displays itself further in the following paragraph.

We have now examined both the notion of peace and the concept of a yoke of Christianity as essential elements in the reproduced sermons in the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia. The third element often mentioned in the sermons was the idea of a 'Christian law' as something the new converts had to accept when embracing Christianity. At one place in the chronicle Henry states that 'Rome makes laws, while Riga irrigates the nations' (*Roma dictat iura, Riga vero rigat gentes*).⁸⁵ This claim might be seen as yet another attempt by Henry to underline the precedence of Riga compared to the Danes, Swedes and Russians in the region: according to Henry, Riga is the only true guardian of the Latin faith in the region, supported as it is by the pope in Rome. The chronicler has just retold how Bishop Albert took part in the Fourth Lateran Council in Rome in 1215, summoned by Pope Innocent III. Henry very carefully explains how the pope, during meetings with Albert, had promised to support the mission in Estonia and Livonia (referred to as the Land of Virgin Mary) like he supported the Christians in the Holy Land (referred to as the Land of Christ).⁸⁶

In a seminal article, the British historian Robert Bartlett stated that paganism (in this specific context Pomeranian paganism of the eleventh century) was both ancestral and considered to be a '*lex*' – a law. Bartlett explains it like this: 'As a *lex*, it was more than a system of beliefs or a set of ritual practices (although it was also both those things), it was a code, a set of norms, a way of life.'⁸⁷ Thus according to Bartlett, when pagans were confronted with the prospect of conversion and the possible adoption of a new religious system, they had not

⁸³ Christopher Tyerman, *Gods War: A New History of the Crusades* (London, 2007), pp. 477–88, 495–500, 689–98.

⁸⁴ John Gilchrist, 'The Lord's War as Proving Ground of Faith: Pope Innocent III and the Propagation of Violence (1198–1216)', in *Crusaders and Muslims in Twelfth-Century Syria*, ed. Maya Shatzmiller (New York, 1993), pp. 65–83.

⁸⁵ HCL XIX.7, p. 132; Brundage, p. 152.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Robert Bartlett, 'The Conversion of a Pagan Society in the Middle Ages', *History* 70/229 (1985), 185–201 (here 190).

only to relate to cultic changes in a narrow sense touching only the 'theological' aspect of their former religious beliefs, but they also had to relate to whether or not they should accept a *nova lex* – a new law, totally rearranging their former way of life.⁸⁸ In his article Bartlett mentions such things as marriage traditions, the notion of time with the introduction of new religious festivals, the banning of infanticide, and so on.⁸⁹

In the chronicle, the mentioning of the 'Christian law' during the various negotiations seems to have had a similar meaning when the pagans are urged to give up their former beliefs and instead accept Christianity and the Christian laws. Henry refers to them with some variations as either 'this Christian Law' (*iura christianorum*),⁹⁰ 'the whole Christian law' (*omni iure christianorum*),⁹¹ or the 'laws of the Christians' (*leges ... christianorum*).⁹² The phrase 'the spiritual law' (*iure spirituali*) is also found in the chronicle.⁹³ Most of these phrases seem in a very general way to refer to Christianity as something that involved duties that had to be fulfilled by the believers, or even a (new) legal system that had to be followed and was meant to replace the old norms and ways of behaviour of the pagan past. This seems to be the case whenever Henry refers to the Latin term *ius/iure*. In one particular incident this becomes especially clear, when the chronicle mentions one priest called Alabrand who was working among the people in Treiden:

after they had accepted the mysteries of holy baptism and, with it, the whole spiritual law (*iure spirituali*), [they] asked their priest, Alabrand, just as he administered spiritual law (*iure spirituali*) for them, likewise to administer civil cases according to the law of the Christians (*iure christianorum*), which by us is called secular law (*iure seculari*).⁹⁴

In this context *iure christianorum* seems to refer to the new behavioural norms and duties that would now replace the old pagan way of life among the newly converted people of Treiden because of their acceptance of Christianity. Henry himself explains that in the old days – before the coming of Christianity – these people had lived an utterly perfidious life with everybody robbing his neighbour. Their acceptance of Christianity had changed all that according to Henry:

⁸⁸ Bartlett, 'The Conversion', p. 190.

⁸⁹ Bartlett, 'The Conversion', p. 193.

⁹⁰ HCL X.15, p. 46; Brundage, p. 67.

⁹¹ HCL XXIX.4, p. 211; Brundage, p. 233.

⁹² HCL XXIII.3, p. 156; Brundage, p. 174.

⁹³ HCL X.15, p. 46; Brundage, p. 67.

⁹⁴ HCL X.15, p. 46; Brundage, p. 67.

but now theft, violence, rapine, and similar things were forbidden as a result of their baptism. Those who had been despoiled before their baptism grieved over the loss of their goods. For, after baptism, they did not dare to take them back by violence and accordingly asked for a secular judge to settle cases of this kind. ... Hence the priest Alabrand was the first to receive the authority to hear both spiritual and civil cases. He, administering quite faithfully the office enjoined on him, both for the sake of God and because of his sins, exercised his authority in cases of rapine and theft, restored things unjustly seized, and so showed the Livonians the right way of living.⁹⁵

Thus according to Henry, Christianity would not only bring salvation to the people but also introduce (through the preaching of the missionaries) an orderly life with new moral and legal standards promising justice to those suffering injustice. For the same reason Henry makes one preacher and missionary promise the newly converted among the Letts that 'they would all enjoy together the same law and the same peace' (*eodem iure et eadem pace*) as the other Christians belonging to the Rigan church.⁹⁶ And during the visitation in Estonia by the papal legate, William of Modena, the chronicle describes how some of the Estonians '... promised that they would receive priests and the whole Christian Law, if only he would free them from the attacks of the Danes.'⁹⁷ In this case the whole Christian law (*omni iure christianorum*) seems also, first and foremost, to refer to the secular norms and duties of the newly converted in their everyday life. Thus new secular laws with (improved) moral standards, but also obligations to be fulfilled by the Christians, might be one aspect of the textual references to the 'laws of the Christians' found throughout the chronicle in connection to the reproduced sermons.

At the same time, however, Henry also seems to be referring to Christianity in itself being a (new) law perhaps more in line with the interpretation by Robert Bartlett.⁹⁸ This is seemingly the case during a sermon in 1219 by Bishop Albert which addressed the Semgalls. Here the bishop urged these pagans to accept baptism and 'the Christian laws', referring to the overall acceptance of Christianity as the new law – *novum lex* – that should replace the old pagan belief.⁹⁹ Further on in the same chapter, Henry uses both *iura* (*/ius*) and *leges* (*/lex*) to differentiate between the new way of behaviour of the new converts

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ HCL XII.6, p. 62; Brundage, p. 83.

⁹⁷ HCL XXIX.4, p. 211; Brundage, p. 233.

⁹⁸ Bartlett, 'The Conversion', pp. 190, 193.

⁹⁹ HCL XXIII.3, p. 156; Brundage, p. 174.

and Christianity itself.¹⁰⁰ And during a military campaign against the Rotalians, it is said in the chronicle that they ‘... still refused to accept the Christian laws (*christianorum leges*)’, referring to the Christian belief in itself and not so much to any (secular) laws and duties that might spring from the acceptance of Christendom.¹⁰¹

A third variation in the text when talking about the ‘law of the Christians’ seems to be Henry’s references to the obligation to pay tithe by the converts. On several occasions Henry mentions the payment of tithes as part of the Christian laws. One such example happened when Bishop Albert told the Livonians that ‘they should thenceforth be held strictly to the tithe payments (*decimas*) and the other laws of Christianity (*iura christianitatis*)’.¹⁰² During a rebellion of some of the Livs, the payment of tithes is again linked with the notion of a Christian law that must be obeyed if one is to become (or stay) a true Christian. The aforementioned priest Alebrand is again quoted in the chronicle as making a long admonitory sermon on the duties of Christians:

He taught them and said: ‘Brood of vipers! How can you, who are always full of the venom of treachery, you who will make no satisfaction for your evil deeds – how can you escape the wrath of God? Do something, therefore, as a product of your penitence and, if you truly wish to be converted to God, God will surely be with you, that you, who have been inconstant and of two minds, may now be constant in your ways, so that you will see that God’s help is with you. You do not yet have the full constancy of faith, you do not yet wish to honor God by giving your tithes. Now truly beseech the lord bishop to forget all of your excesses and to enjoin upon you a full remission of your sins, so that sincerely believing in God, you may fully receive all the laws of Christianity. Pay a tenth of your harvests to God and God’s servants, as do all other nations who have been reborn in the font of holy baptism. God will so increase the other nine parts for you that you will have a greater abundance of goods and of money than before. God will free you from the attacks of other nations and from all of your troubles as well’.¹⁰³

It is interesting to note that the payment of tithes is not only associated with the keeping of the Christian law; in this text the willingness to pay tithes is the hallmark of a proper Christian belief and Alebrand (or Henry) even promises the Livs that they will receive ‘a full remission of ... sins’ (*plenariam ... remissionem peccatorum*) once they have submitted to the claims of the bishop. In return God

¹⁰⁰ HCL XXIII.6, p. 159.

¹⁰¹ HCL XIX.8, p. 132; Brundage, p. 152.

¹⁰² HCL XV.5, p. 93; Brundage, p. 114.

¹⁰³ HCL XVI.4, pp. 110–11; Brundage, p. 130.

will enhance what is left of their earthly possessions so that they will be even richer than before.

Conclusions

To sum up, this chapter has tried to focus on the importance of the preachers and their sermons in the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia. Warfare was not the only means by which Christianity prevailed in the former pagan societies in the Baltic region. According to Henry the word of God was equally powerful in this process, as shown through the careful chosen examples of preachers and their sermons presented in the chronicle.

Henry is very careful to present the main characters of his chronicle as gifted preachers; first and foremost the bishops Meinhard, Bertold and Albert as the leading figures of the Livonian church. But also the Danish archbishop Anders Sunesen and the papal legate William of Modena are portrayed as gifted preachers with a proper theological education. Especially the Danish archbishop seems to have been very keen on the theological training of the clerics in Riga prior to what Henry states is the final conversion of the Livs.

It is, however, not only the bishops, the archbishops and the papal legates who are portrayed in the chronicle as well-trained preachers – the ordinary clerics and missionaries are also often presented by Henry as dedicated and exceptional preachers capable of persuading the pagans or apostates to accept Christianity and to renounce their former pagan beliefs through skilful sermons. Henry even refers to some of these preachers as being 'co-workers in the gospel', thus placing them in a biblical tradition of the true followers of Christ.

As mentioned in the chapter, quite a lot of these sermons reproduced in Henry's chronicle are, with all probability, literary constructions by the chronicler, as would be the case in other missionary chronicles of the previous ages. Henry was, however, a trained preacher and parish priest himself, accustomed to the ways of preaching among pagans and the newly converted in the region. This fact lends a certain credibility to the overall representation of the main themes of the missionary sermons and speeches presented in the chronicle, whether or not Henry was actually present on the various occasions described in the text.

Thus analysis of the sermons reproduced has provided us with insight into some of the general themes that were touched upon by the preachers and missionaries in their sermons. First and foremost it was established that Henry regarded a minimum of theological training as important and necessary for those involved in the missionary work. Secondly the preachers seem to have been preoccupied with the overall notion of the Christian God being both

stronger and mightier than the pagan gods; in several of the reproduced sermons Henry touches upon this important theme, referring to the Christian deity as the superior 'good God' and the pagan deities as inferior 'bad gods'.

Another theme often touched upon in the reproduced sermons is the notion of 'true peace'. The acceptance of Christianity and the Christian God is, to Henry, the only way that a true peace could be obtained by the people in Livonia and Estonia, thereby equalling Christ himself with this peace. This talk about peace in the sermons is broadened by references to a certain yoke – either the yoke of the lord as something the pagans had to accept by turning away from paganism and instead accepting Christianity, or the yoke of one of the secular rulers of the region that might also be imposed on the indigenous people. Henry even combines these two yokes in the sermons reproduced, claiming that only submission to the Rigan church in both religious and secular matters will bring about a proper Christian people. This viewpoint is stressed again in the sermons when Henry makes the preachers talk about the laws of the Christians, referring on some occasions to a necessary change in the norms that would govern society (*jus*) or more radically as Christianity itself being a law (*lex*).

Thus by analysing the sermons found in the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia, we are offered a very valuable insight into the essential ideas of an early thirteenth-century chronicler, missionary man, priest and preacher working on the fringes of Christendom. Future studies might gain more insight into this topic by comparing Henry's chronicle in depth with other contemporary (missionary) chronicles.

PART II

Practices

Chapter 8

Riga and Rome: Henry of Livonia and the Papal Curia

Iben Fonnesberg-Schmidt

Introduction

The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia tells us that in 1201 the new bishop of Livonia, Albert (r. 1199–1229), decided to seek help against the ‘treacherous’ Livs. The bishop,

knowing the wickedness of the Livonians and seeing that he could not make progress among that people without pilgrims, sent Brother Theodoric of Treiden to Rome for letters authorizing an expedition. He revealed the business committed to him to the most holy Pope Innocent and through his kindness obtained the letters which he requested. Upon Theodoric’s insistence and request, the same venerable bishop of the Roman see strictly prohibited under anathema all merchants from using the port of Semigallia.¹

Henry’s chronicle contains numerous examples of such embassies from the Livonian church to the papal curia with appeals for authorizations of the fight against the pagans and requests for privileges and support. This frequent use of the papal curia – which is amply supported by the epistolary evidence – was not the brainchild of Bishop Albert. Henry tells us that already the first missionary bishop, Meinhard, sent a messenger to Rome ‘to take counsel with the lord pope’, as did his successor, Bertold.² Albert, however, made very extensive use of

¹ HCL IV.6–7, p. 20; Brundage, p. 38.

² Henry mentions only one such embassy from Meinhard (HCL I.12, pp. 8–10); the composition of his chronicle suggests that it took place in 1195 or 1196. However, Meinhard also received other papal letters: certainly one letter (in 1190) from Clement III (r. 1187–91) and a letter of 27 April 1193 from Celestine III (r. 1191–98). These are likely to have been obtained by emissaries from the archbishopric of Hamburg-Bremen which also had obtained two letters regarding the Livonian mission in 1188: a confirmation of its metropolitan rights over the see of Üxküll (Latv. Ikšķile) (25 September 1188: LUB 1/1,

this practice.³ During his 30 years in office, he sent messengers to Rome a good dozen times, an impressive number given the size of the early Livonian mission.

Drawing on Henry's chronicle of Livonia and the surviving papal letters, this chapter will explore the missionary bishops' strategies towards the papal curia and the response from the pope and his curial officers. It will discuss how Innocent III (r. 1198–1216) perceived the distance between Rome and the faraway church provinces and how well informed he was about events in Livonia and Estonia. But first we must clarify how Henry wished to present relations between Riga and Rome.

Henry had dedicated his life to the missionary work in Livonia and Estonia organized by the Livonian church. A central – or perhaps even the main – purpose for him in writing his chronicle is to demonstrate to the audience that this work is pleasing to God and to His representative on Earth, the Roman pontiff. He illustrates the first point by incorporating several miracle stories showing divine intervention in favour of the missionaries and their new converts. The second point is made clear through numerous references to papal authorizations of the Livonian campaigns, grants of remissions of sins and other expressions of papal support, among them a lengthy account of the famous encounter between Innocent III and Bishop Albert at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215.⁴ Henry wishes to present the Baltic campaigns as equal to the crusades in aid of the Holy Land; he drives home this point in the fabricated dialogue between Innocent and Albert at the Council in which he lets Albert make a parallel between the Holy Land, the country of the Son, and Livonia, the Land of the Mother.⁵ Wishing to eulogize the role played by the Livonian church and to secure its claims, Henry downplays the contributions to the conversion of the Baltic peoples from external powers, including the see at

no. 9) and a confirmation of Meinhard's consecration as bishop of Üxküll (1 October 1188: LUB 1/1, no. 10). Bertold's embassy is described in HCL II.3, p. 12. See also Barbara Bombi, 'Celestine III and the Conversion of the Heathen on the Baltic Frontier', in *Pope Celestine III (1191–1198): Diplomat and Pastor*, ed. John Doran and Damian J. Smith (Farnham and Burlington, 2008), pp. 145–58.

³ This is in line with the general increase in the number of petitions submitted to the papal curia from the early thirteenth century onwards; see Patrick N.R. Zutshi, 'Petitioners, Popes, Proctors: the Development of Curial Institutions, c. 1150–1250', in *Pensiero e sperimentazioni istituzionali nella 'Societas Christiana' (1046–1250)*, ed. Giancarlo Andenna (Milan, 2007), pp. 265–93, and Zutshi, 'Innocent III and the Reform of the Papal Chancery', in *Innocenzo III. Urbs et Orbis. Atti del Congresso Internazionale Roma, 9–15 settembre 1998*, ed. Andrea Sommerlechner, 2 vols (Rome, 2003), vol. 1, pp. 84–101.

⁴ HCL XIX.7, p. 196. These references also reflect Henry's awareness of the need for papal sanction of penitential campaigns and of the papal involvement in the crusades to the Holy Land.

⁵ HCL XIX.7, p. 196; Brundage, p. 152.

Hamburg-Bremen, and the Danish and Swedish churches. However, while he does gloss over the rivalry between the Christian powers over land, souls and power in the conquered regions, he does not entirely leave out the disputes between the Livonian church and the Sword Brethren,⁶ presumably because he was aware that his intended audience (the ecclesiastical and secular elite of northern Germany and the papal legate, William of Modena [c. 1184–1251]) had some awareness of them. Instead he used the opportunity to present the conflicts in a light favourable to the Livonian church.⁷

Henry wishes to depict the relationship between the curia and the Livonian church as strong and symbiotic. To this end he uses the often-quoted pun '*Roma dictat iura, Riga vero rigat gentes*' – 'Rome makes laws, while Riga irrigates the nations'.⁸ In the chronicle this line serves as a rhetorical device to tie together two sections of text describing two events which appear to be geographically and thematically disparate: the previous paragraph recounts Bishop Albert's successful meeting with Pope Innocent at the Fourth Lateran Council; in the following paragraph we are back in the eastern Baltic region to follow Petrus Kakewalde and Otto the Priest baptize the Estonians of Saccala (Est. Sakala) and Ugaunia (Est. Ugandi). The pun also serves to show the close interrelatedness and interdependency of the papal curia and the Livonian church: the papacy sets out the rules – at councils and at the curia – while the missionaries in Livonia and Estonia implement them.

From Riga to Rome

The intensive use of the papal curia was quite a novelty for missionary ventures. Previous missionaries had certainly sought papal approval; one example is the Cistercian monk Berno (d. c. 1190) who took up missionary work among the

⁶ He does, however, occasionally omit papal decisions that were critical of or unfavourable to Bishop Albert and the Livonian church. This includes a papal rebuke of Albert's harsh treatment of the new converts (LUB 1/1, no. 28 of 11 October 1213; instead Henry ridicules the Livonians' accusations against Albert (HCL X.1, pp. 44–6) as well as some of the papal decisions in the struggle between the Sword Brethren and Bishop Albert for land and power, including the creation of bishoprics in the conquered territories in Livonia and Estonia. The rivalry over division of land between Albert and the Sword Brethren was mediated by the pope in October 1210: LUB 1/1, nos 16–17; see also Friedrich Benninghoven, *Der Orden der Schwertbrüder. Fratres milicie Christi de Livonia* (Cologne, 1965), pp. 113–16; and again in October 1213 (LUB 1/1, nos 27–31).

⁷ Henry's references to the rivalry between the Sword Brethren and Bishop Albert are thus designed to depict the bishop's paternal generosity (HCL XI.3, pp. 68–70).

⁸ HCL XIX.7, p. 196; Brundage, p. 152 (with n. 174).

pagans of Mecklenburg after having secured the approval of Pope Adrian IV (r. 1154–59).⁹ But they did not enter into a close relationship with the papacy. That was only to become customary in the middle of the thirteenth century with the collaboration between the popes and the mendicant orders.

In taking this innovative approach the Livonian bishops may well have been influenced by the mission to the Estonians which the Danish Archbishop Eskil (r. 1137–77) and Peter of Celle (at the time abbot of Saint-Rémi in Reims, d. 1183) had planned 20 years earlier. Eskil and Peter had received several letters from Pope Alexander III (r. 1159–81) in support of their mission.¹⁰ Some were intended for public consumption and would have been read aloud in churches across the Scandinavian church provinces. Knowledge of the papacy's involvement in these missionary plans is likely to have filtered through to those circles in northern Germany from which the Livonian mission sprang – perhaps via the clergy or via travellers in the regional centres of infrastructure such as the port of Lübeck. It could thus easily have been known in the archiepiscopal administration in Hamburg-Bremen which supported Meinhard and made him a suffragan bishop in 1186. This administration had involved the papal curia in the new Livonian mission from its early stages, securing letters confirming Hamburg-Bremen's rights over the see of Üxküll (Latv. Ikšķile) as well as Meinhard's consecration as bishop of Üxküll.¹¹ Henry does not mention this precedent (or indeed the role of Hamburg-Bremen in setting up the mission) but then he is generally keen to play down the influence of Hamburg-Bremen.

Sending an embassy to Rome was, of course, demanding in terms of energy and resources.¹² Henry's chronicle shows that the messengers from Riga often got a free ride for the first leg of their journey as they travelled by boat to Germany

⁹ See, for instance, Winfried Schich, 'Zum Wirken der Zisterzienser im östlichen Mitteleuropa im 12. und 13. Jahrhundert', in *Zisterziensische Spiritualität. Theologische Grundlagen, funktionale Voraussetzungen und bildhafte Ausprägungen im Mittelalter*, ed. Clemens Kaspar and Klaus Schreiner (St Ottilien, 1994), pp. 269–94 (here 275–8).

¹⁰ Letters of 9, 11 and 17 September 1171–72: DD 1: 3, nos 26–8. See also Lauritz Weibull, 'Påven Alexander III:s septemberbrev till Norden', *Scandia* 13 (1940), 90–98. Peter had been abbot of Montier-la-Celle (c. 1145–62) and was later to become bishop of Chartres (1180–83).

¹¹ See footnote 2 above.

¹² The young Livonian military order, the Sword Brethren, found it too logistically and financially demanding to repeatedly petition the Roman curia and in 1213 successfully asked the pope to be allowed to have its disputes settled locally, namely by the abbot on Gotland and the provosts of *de Northlanda, et de Sutherlanda prepositis Lundensis dioecesis* (letter of 11 October 1213: LUB 1/1, no. 31; for a discussion of the ecclesiastical organization outlined here, see DD 1: 5, p. 61).

with the returning western arms-bearers.¹³ Riga would, however, have had to foot the bill for the rest of the journey – which probably took between six and eight weeks, depending on the season and mode of transportation¹⁴ – as well as the stay in Rome.

Nevertheless Bishop Albert clearly thought it was worth it. The missionaries no doubt ascribed great moral and spiritual significance to obtaining approval for their venture from the pope, the Vicar of Christ, and the papal letters presumably boosted the religious fervour of the missionaries in the field. Recounting events in 1211, Henry certainly tells us that upon receiving a series of privileges as well as a new authorization to recruit more crusaders, everybody in Livonia rejoiced because they thereby were ‘receiving the consolation even of the supreme pontiff’.¹⁵ However, when describing the embassies to Rome, Henry mostly adopts a very casual tone as if sending messengers many hundreds of kilometres across Latin Christian Europe to appeal to the supreme pontiff, the leader of Christendom, was a trivial matter. Perhaps he wished to impress upon his audience that there were such close ties between Riga and Rome that the geographical distance mattered little.

The missionary bishops approached the pope because they wanted certain letters granting them specific authorizations for their campaigns, privileges, or advice on particular problems.¹⁶ And we gather from Henry that what they hoped for were, above all, grants of indulgence with which they could recruit arms-bearers in northern Germany.

The indulgence plays a prominent part in Henry’s chronicle. With his frequent references to the papal grants of this spiritual reward, he reminded his audience that the papacy supported the Livonian venture. But its central position probably also reflects the importance that the Livonian missionaries and German arms-bearers at the time ascribed to it.¹⁷ Henry certainly depicts the

¹³ Most papal letters to Livonia were therefore issued in the autumn or early winter. Messengers also often travelled with arms-bearers from Germany to Livonia on the way back from Rome (HCL VIII.2, p. 32; for a more difficult journey, see HCL I.12, pp. 8–10). Occasionally – in winter – the journey went over land through Prussia (see HCL XIV.13, p. 130).

¹⁴ The estimate is based on information from Jarl Gallén, ‘Les voyages de S. Dominique au Danemark. Essai de datation’, in *Xenia medii aevi historiam illustrantia oblata Thomae Kaeppli*, ed. Raymundus Creytens and Pius Künzle, 2 vols (Rome, 1978), vol. 1, p. 83; and Norbert Ohler, *The Medieval Traveller* (Woodbridge, 1989), p. 101.

¹⁵ HCL XIV.13, p. 130; Brundage, pp. 108–9.

¹⁶ See, for instance, 1201: HCL IV.6–7, p. 20, which is quoted in the introduction above.

¹⁷ As indeed did others; there are numerous examples of the importance ascribed to the indulgence, including the Iberian bishops who in 1215 asked to have the indulgence for the

spiritual award as an essential factor in the decision of Western warriors to help the new church. One example is from 1203 when, he tells us, a group of knights who had signed up to fight the Livonian pagans wanted instead to go into battle against the Estonians in revenge for an attack on a Christian community. They asked Bishop Albert for permission to do so. He tried to dissuade them but they persisted and begged the bishop to enjoin that battle on them and to grant them an indulgence – which he eventually did.¹⁸ If we may trust Henry's account, Albert himself believed the indulgence to be the decisive motivating factor. That is seen in an incident in 1208. Fearing a joint attack by Prince Vladimir of Pskov and Prince Vetseke of Kokenhusen (Latv. Koknese), Albert wished to persuade a group of arms-bearers (who were about to go home after having served for one year, as was customary)¹⁹ to postpone their return. He therefore asked them to resume 'the sign of the cross in return for a plenary remission of their previously neglected sins and promised them a greater indulgence and eternal life for the greater labour of their long pilgrimage'.²⁰ He was thus trying to bribe them, as it were, into serving longer by offering a greater indulgence.

We must assume that the papal letters with their authorizations and promises of a spiritual reward were used by Albert on his almost annual recruitment tours as he 'made the rounds through Germany, through the villages, streets and churches' and 'through highways and byways, through cities and forts,' looking for 'those who would set themselves up as a wall for the house of the Lord and take on the sign of the cross in order to go by sea to Livonia ...'.²¹ The papal letters would have been read aloud by Albert and their details and privileges would have been discussed by Albert and his audience.²²

Obtaining these important letters was entrusted only to carefully selected emissaries. Henry's chronicle shows that for the first two decades of Albert's office, the messenger sent from Riga to Rome was often the Cistercian Theodoric of Treiden, abbot of Dünamünde and later bishop of Estonia (r.

Holy Land extended to Iberia (presumably because it had been revoked in 1212): Joseph F. O'Callaghan, 'Innocent III and the Kingdoms of Castile and Leon', in *Pope Innocent III and his World*, ed. John C. Moore (Aldershot, 1999), pp. 317–35, here 335.

¹⁸ HCL VII.2, p. 26.

¹⁹ That one year was the expected length of service is suggested by HCL XI.8, p. 56.

²⁰ HCL XI.9, p. 57. Brundage, p. 78, translates this passage as: 'He comforted them by reminding them of the previous plenary remission of their neglected sins, and, because of the greater labours they would now be undertaking on their long pilgrimage, he promised a greater indulgence and eternal life.'

²¹ HCL X.17, p. 66; Brundage, p. 68, and HCL XIV.4, p. 74; Brundage, p. 96.

²² See, for instance, Henry's account of a discussion of the details of a papal letter at King Philip's Christmas court in Magdeburg in 1199: HCL III.2, p. 16.

1211–19).²³ These repeated visits would have given Theodoric an insight into the workings of the papal bureaucracy and improved his chances of navigating the curial maze.

Some embassies were more elaborate than others. In 1203 Theodoric thus went to Rome and took with him Caupo (d. 1217),

who was a kind of king and elder of the Livonians, and, having traversed a large part of Germany, at length brought him to Rome and presented him to the apostolic father. The latter received him most graciously, kissed him, asked many things about the status of the tribes dwelling about Livonia, and gave many thanks to God for the conversion of the Livonian people. After several days the venerable Pope Innocent presented his gift, namely a hundred gold pieces, to Caupo, and, since he wished to go back to Germany, blessed him, bidding farewell with great and loving affection. By Brother Theodoric he sent to the bishop of Livonia a Bible written by the hand of the Blessed Pope Gregory.²⁴

Thus, according to Henry, just a few years after his election as bishop, Albert planned an extensive propaganda tour aimed at promoting the Livonian venture. First Caupo was led round Germany, displayed as the epitome of the success of the conversion effort, in order to recruit more fighters. Then the Livonian elder was sent to Rome to convince Innocent III of the validity and success of the project and to secure further papal support. In a sense, Caupo was offered as a 'gift' to the pope, as a representative of the peoples who now joined the *Christianitas*. Innocent responded by offering generous gifts to both

²³ Theodoric had already joined the Livonian mission during the years of Meinhard's bishopric; for his biography, see Paul Johansen, *Nordische Mission, Revals Gründung und die Schwedensiedlung in Estland* (Stockholm, 1951), pp. 94–104, and Benninghoven, *Der Orden der Schwertbrüder*, pp. 20–23.

²⁴ HCL VII.3, p. 28; Brundage, p. 43. The journey is also described in the *Eight Books of Miracles* by Caesarius of Heisterbach (c. 1170–c. 1240): 'Die Fragmente der Libri VIII miraculorum des Caesarius von Heisterbach', ed. Aloys Meister, *Römische Quartalschrift für christliche Alterthumskunde und für Kirchengeschichte* 13 (Supplementsheft) (Rome, 1901), I.31, pp. 45–8; and in the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* which is believed to have been composed around 1290; it gives the obviously erroneous date of 1143 for the visit: *Liivländische Reimchronik*, ed. Leo Mayer (Paderborn, 1876), lines 310–436. For a discussion of the journey, including the differences between the three accounts, see Marek Tamm, 'Les miracles en Livonie et en Estonie à l'époque de la christianisation (fin XIIème–début XIIIème siècles)', in *Quotidianum Estonicum: Aspects of Daily Life in Medieval Estonia*, ed. Jüri Kivimäe and Juhan Kreem (Krems, 1996), pp. 29–78, esp. 72–3 and 75; see also Torben K. Nielsen, 'Mission, omvendelse og samfundsomvæltning i Baltikum i 1200-tallet', in *Krig, korstog og kolonisering* (*Den jyske Historiker* 89) (Aarhus, 2000), pp. 89–111 (here 95–6).

Caupo and Albert – gifts that both emphasized his bestowal of patronage and his superiority.²⁵ The papal present to Caupo was no doubt intended to create ties of loyalty, and Henry will have us know that the gift-giving strategy worked: he informs us that after his return from Rome, Caupo became ‘most faithful’ (*fidelissimus factus est*).²⁶

Henry refers to quite a few papal letters sent to the Livonian mission. It was at the time quite common to include transcripts of important papal or royal letters in chronicles. However, Henry does not do this, and his summary of the letters is furthermore extremely cursory, merely summing up the actions prescribed in the letters’ *dispositiones*. He may never have had the opportunity to inspect the curial letters and certainly does not appear to have had access to them when composing his chronicle. Indeed, he is likely mainly to have had oral knowledge of these letters, having heard them read aloud, quoted and paraphrased, and discussed among the Livonian clergy.²⁷

Henry often mentions that the Livonian bishops sent reports to the pope aimed at bringing about papal action and support for their project. These are, however, all lost so we do not know exactly how the Livonian petitioners presented their undertaking or argued their case before the curia. Nevertheless, we can learn a great deal from the *narrationes* of the papal letters which summarized some of the information contained in the petitions. Innocent’s first letter to the Livonian mission, *Sicut ecclesiastice religionis* of October 1199, suggests that Albert in his first reports to Rome had given a fairly accurate picture of the previous local campaigns, including the force used against the pagans. The papal response began with a rebuke: Innocent said that he welcomed new converts to the church, but they must have come to the faith voluntarily; the

²⁵ There is, of course, an extensive anthropological debate about gift-giving, reciprocity and exchange, starting with the works of the French sociologist Marcel Mauss in the 1920s. These sets of ideas have been applied by medievalists since the 1950s – primarily but certainly not exclusively by scholars working on early medieval history.

²⁶ HCL X.10, p. 56. When in 1217 Caupo was killed in battle against the Estonians, he left all his goods to the churches of Livonia, Henry tells us (HCL XXI. 4, p. 214).

²⁷ Only on very few occasions can we compare the extant papal letters with Henry’s brief references to papal privileges and authorizations and thereby gauge his understanding of them. However, during his description of the year 1208, Henry (HCL XI.9, p. 82) refers to a plenary indulgence granted to crusaders going to Livonia, although the surviving letters on the Livonian campaigns from the incumbent pope, Innocent III, merely offer an unspecified indulgence, as mentioned above. As for the indulgence granted by Innocent’s predecessors, it remains possible that Celestine III had granted a plenary indulgence for the Livonian crusades: see Iben Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *The Popes and the Baltic Crusades, 1147–1252* (Leiden, 2007), pp. 70–78.

Christian creed, he emphasized, does not allow for forced conversion.²⁸ His subsequent letters did not contain such rebukes. Perhaps we may surmise that Albert had learned his lesson and from then on described the Livonian warfare in more canonically correct terms.

We do not know whether the Livonian bishops in their letters to Rome tried to present their fight as similar to the crusades in aid of the Holy Land. But the north German participants in the Livonian venture in the early years of the thirteenth century certainly appear to have perceived themselves as crusaders just like those who went to the Holy Land, quite irrespective of what the incumbent pope told them. The narrative composed by Arnold of Lübeck may throw some light on this matter. Arnold continued the *Chronicle of the Slavs*, which had been begun by Helmold of Bosau (c. 1120–after 1177), and must have completed his chronicle in the early 1210s; it ends with events of 1209 and he died sometime between 1211 and 1214. He devoted a whole chapter to the ‘conversion of Livonia’.²⁹ He used the term ‘pilgrimage’ (*iter peregrinationis*) for the journey to Livonia and referred to the arms-bearers, or ‘pilgrims’, as he would have it, as having decided ‘to wear the holy cross’. He furthermore described the people against whom these pilgrims fought as ‘the enemies of the Cross of Christ’ (*cruces Christi inimicos*). In short, he used the terminology which at the time commonly – in papal letters and elsewhere – was used to describe the fight against the Muslims in the Holy Land and which drew heavily on the association of crusading with pilgrimage. This may well reflect not just Arnold’s view but also the self-perception of the arms-bearers and preachers whom he met in Lübeck. At the time when he was composing his narrative, the pope did not use these terms in any of the surviving letters – and we do have quite a few – on the Livonian mission and the fighting in its defence.³⁰ Similarly, the phrasing of the *narratio* of a papal reply to Count Albert of Holsatia and Orlamünde

²⁸ ‘Sicut ecclesiastice religionis censura compelli non patitur ad credendum inuitos ...’: DD 1: 3, no. 254 (of 5 October 1199).

²⁹ Arnold of Lübeck, *Chronica Slavorum*, ed. Johann Martin Lappenberg, MGH rer. Germ. (Hanover, 1868), V.30, pp. 212–17.

³⁰ Some of the phrases had, however, been used in letters to the Danish King Valdemar II (r. 1202–41) and Archbishop Anders Sunesen (r. 1201–22) who in 1206, 1209 and 1210 received letters regarding their campaigns against pagans in the Baltic region. A letter of 1209 thus refers to the royal expedition as *tam sancta peregrinatione* (the letter was issued twice to different recipients: DD 1: 4, nos 162–3); another letter, of 1210, refers to the Danish king as having taken the cross, *signo crucis assumpto* (DD 1: 4, no. 173). Enjoying the benefits of hindsight and modern cartography, historians now tend to group together the missionary bishops’ campaigns in Livonia and Estonia with those planned by the Danish king. There is, however, no indication that Innocent III did this. His letters to the Danes did not specify in which part of the Baltic region they were authorized to campaign.

(c. 1182–1245) suggests that the count had, a few years previously, applied for permission to ‘receive the sign of the cross’ (*caracterem crucis accipere*) to go to Livonia, thus indicating that local princes used crusade terminology when discussing the warfare in Livonia.³¹

The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia also contains numerous examples of such terminology. This is perhaps not surprising: at the time when Henry wrote, in the late 1220s, the papal letters on the Livonian mission had begun to employ the full range of crusading terminology. Henry’s decision to use phrases of this kind about the Livonian venture certainly reflects his wish to depict the Livonian campaigns as equal to the crusades in the Levant. However, I would suggest that the ease, frequency and consistency with which these terms flowed from Henry’s pen suggest that this was how he himself perceived the Livonian undertaking – and indeed how he and his fellow Christians in the Baltic region had long been accustomed to perceive it.

From Rome to Riga

If in fact the Livonian bishops tried to present an image of their campaigns as being on a par with the crusades to the East, Innocent did not take the bait. Not only did his letters on the Livonian mission not contain any crusade terminology; he did not grant participants in Livonia the same temporal and spiritual rewards that he gave crusaders in the East.³²

³¹ ‘Verum quia sicut tuis nobis litteris intimasti; te pro expeditione regia in remotis agente cum ad bone memorie. I. predecessorem nostrum litteras destinasses ut tibi liceret caracterem crucis accipere uolenti contra paganos Liuonicos proficisci ...’: DD 1: 5, no. 101 (of 25 January 1217). The letter was issued by Honorius III (1216–27) but refers to an earlier letter sent by Count Albert to Innocent III. The choice of words – *caracterem crucis* rather than *signum crucis* – may suggest that Honorius here quotes directly from Albert’s petition and may reflect a local translation of the vernacular phrase. The only example of this phrase listed in the 1883–87 edition by Du Cange – *Glossarium mediae et infimae latinitatis*, ed. C. Du Cange, D.P. Carpenter, G.A.L. Henschel and L. Favre, 10 vols (Niort, 1883–87), vol. 4, p. 486 – comes from Bavaria.

³² While Innocent did not grant participants in the missionary bishops’ campaigns in Livonia and Estonia the same privileges or use the same terminology as for the crusades in aid of the Holy Land, he clearly saw the campaigns as penitential warfare. He also associated them with the crusades in the Levant, at least in the sense that he exhorted those who for financial or health reasons were unable to journey to Jerusalem to fight in the Baltic region instead. For discussions of Innocent III’s policies on the Baltic crusades, see Helmuth Roscher, *Papst Innocenz III. und die Kreuzzüge* (Göttingen, 1969); Michele Maccarrone, ‘I papi e gli inizi della cristianizzazione della Livonia’, in *Gli inizi del cristianesimo in Livonia-*

For the Livonian bishops – and Henry – conversion and (penitential) warfare had come to be intrinsically linked. Not so for Innocent. To him the Livonian undertaking was, first and foremost, a missionary project which was to work through peaceful means if at all possible. His letters emphasized this point, not just in the actions they prescribed but also in their choice of biblical imagery and quotations.

That the missionaries were to convert the Livonians through preaching is clear from *Sicut ecclesiastice religionis* of October 1199, in which Innocent explicitly stated that the church could only accept voluntary conversion.³³ In another letter, *Is qui ecclesiam suam* of 1201 in which he gave advice on a number of issues, including the canonical regulations concerning marriage and consanguinity for new converts, he reminded the missionaries of how the Livonian venture had been set up to evangelize peacefully among the pagans, and he repeatedly wrote of their obligation to preach.³⁴ The message was emphasized by the biblical quotations chosen for the letter. The missionary injunction from Matthew (28:19) was quoted verbatim and the letter contains several other examples of that imagery and those New Testament quotes which were commonly used to refer to the peaceful means of conversion, preaching and evangelizing. Among them are the parable of the workers in the vineyard from Matthew (20:1–16) and the image of the fields ready for harvest from John (4:35–38).³⁵

The exchange of gifts between Innocent and Albert in 1203 may further illustrate this point. As Brenda Bolton has shown, Innocent did not choose his gifts randomly. The gift list in the *Gesta Innocentii*, as well as other presents from this pope, testify to the careful consideration that went into choosing a gift with an appropriate symbolic and spiritual value.³⁶ Among the examples is Innocent's gift of four gold rings to Richard I, king of England (r. 1189–99), in 1198. The rings were set with different jewels, each one, it was explained, with a different spiritual meaning: a green emerald for faith, a red garnet for charity, a clear

Lettonia, ed. Michele Maccarrone (Vatican City, 1989), pp. 31–80; Barbara Bombi, *Novella Plantatio Fidei. Missione et crociata nel nord Europa tra la fine del XII e i primi decenni del XIII secolo* (Rome, 2007); and Fønnesberg-Schmidt, *The Popes and the Baltic Crusades*, chapter 2.

³³ Letter of 5 October 1199: DD 1: 3, no. 254.

³⁴ Letter of 19 April 1201: Maccarrone, 'I papi e gli inizi della christianizzazione', pp. 78–80.

³⁵ A similar terminology is employed in *Quoniam iuxta sententiam* of 30 October 1213 (LUB 1/1, no. 32) where the missionaries are called the 'new apostles'.

³⁶ Brenda Bolton, "'Qui fidelis est in minima'. The Importance of Innocent III's Gift List', in *Pope Innocent III and his World*, pp. 113–40, esp. pp. 135–6.

sapphire for hope and a radiant topaz for good works.³⁷ A considered choice of appropriate gifts is also suggested by the fact that Innocent gave the layman Caupo gold pieces while the bishop received a Bible.

Innocent's gift may give us further information about how he saw the Livonian mission. By choosing a manuscript which at the time was alleged to have links to Gregory I (r. 590–604), the great missionary pope, he showed that he saw the Livonian venture as a traditional missionary project.³⁸ The letter *Is qui ecclesiam suam* of 1201 to the Livonian missionaries also shows how Innocent linked that mission with Gregory. Here Innocent built on Gregory's policy – a fact he explicitly acknowledged in the *dispositio* of the letter – and paraphrased part of a letter from his eminent predecessor.³⁹

Innocent did sanction the use of force but only in defence of the missionaries and new converts. In a letter of October 1204, *Etsi verba evangelizantium*, he stated that there were to be two distinct groups, with very different tasks, working in Livonia: a group of missionaries, made up of members of various religious orders (namely Cistercians, Benedictines and regular canons), collaborating to convert the heathen, and a group of warriors, laymen who had taken up arms to defend the new plantation of the Christian faith against the 'barbarians' threatening to destroy it.⁴⁰ The pope made it clear that the latter group was to be organized as a military order; it is thus the earliest known papal approval of the Sword Brethren (or the *Fratres Milicie Christi de Livonia*).⁴¹ Later, Innocent

³⁷ Bolton, '*Qui fidelis est in minima*', p. 138. Another example relates to a present to Conrad of Querfurt; Bolton, '*Qui fidelis est in minima*', p. 138; *Gesta Innocentii XLIV, The Deeds of Pope Innocent III by an Anonymous Author*, trans. James M. Powell (Washington, DC, 2004), p. xxvi and pp. 59–61.

³⁸ Arbusow and Bauer note (HCL, p. 29) that 'Die Bibelhandschrift ist noch 1501 im Dom zu Riga nachweisbar'. There was a long tradition, documented since the Carolingians, of giving valuable manuscripts as gifts; see, for instance, Rosamund McKitterick, *The Carolingians and the Written Word* (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 155–9.

³⁹ Letter of 19 April 1201: Maccarrone, 'I papi e gli inizi della christianizzazione', pp. 78–80. Gregory's letter is printed in PL 77, cols 1322–8; see also Barbara Bombi, 'Innocent III and the "praedicatio" to the Heathens in Livonia (1198–1204)', in *Medieval History Writing and Crusading Ideology*, ed. Kurt Villads Jensen and Tuomas M.S. Lehtonen (Helsinki, 2005), pp. 232–41. For Innocent's view of Gregory the Great, see John Doran, 'The Role Models of Innocent III', in *Innocenzo III. Urbs et Orbis*, ed. Andrea Sommerlechner, 2 vols (Rome, 2001), vol. 1 pp. 56–73, and Christoph Egger, 'The Growling of the Lion and the Humming of the Fly: Gregory the Great and Innocent III', in *Pope, Church and City. Essays in Honour of Brenda M. Bolton*, ed. Frances Andrews et al. (Leiden, 2004), pp. 13–46.

⁴⁰ *Die Register Innocenz' III.*, ed. Othmar Hageneder et al. (Graz, 1964–), 7, no. 2037, no. 139 (of 12 October 1204).

⁴¹ See also Benninghoven, *Der Orden der Schwertbrüder*, pp. 39–44.

gave up this organizational advice, but he maintained that violence was only to be used in Livonia in defence of the new converts: thus the main theme of the *arenga* of *Alto diuine*, a papal recruitment letter for the Livonian campaigns issued shortly after the Fourth Lateran Council, was the persecution of the neophytes.⁴²

Innocent's perception of the Livonian venture is crystallized in a short reference which he made in a letter addressed to the clergy in Constantinople in early 1205, *Evangelica docente Scriptura*, setting out the ecclesiological significance of the unification of the two Christian churches and his own vision for the Roman church. Based on Luke (5:1–11), the letter's lengthy *arenga* centres on the boat of St Peter – that is, the church led by Peter's successor, the pope – and the act of fishing for souls. Innocent wrote:

Although my predecessors have toiled greatly they have taken virtually nothing. But where I have let down the net at the word of the Lord, my brothers and I have enclosed a great multitude of fish: in Livonia, by converting pagans through preachers sent there for the faith; in Bulgaria and Vlachia, by leading divided peoples into unity; in Armenia by seeking out those long lost peoples through dispatching legates to them.⁴³

Here Innocent clearly stated that the peoples of Livonia had joined the church through peaceful evangelization, not through conquest and force. It was the preachers who were bringing Livonia into Christendom, not the arms-bearers.

Such views, coupled with the fact that Innocent did not use crusade terminology or grant participants in the Livonian and Estonian campaigns the same privileges as crusaders to the Holy Land enjoyed, suggest that there may have been some discrepancy between Riga and Rome – between how, on the one hand, the participants in the Baltic campaigns perceived their project and how, on the other hand, Pope Innocent saw it. Part of this discrepancy was eliminated with the papacy of Honorius III (r. 1216–27). Honorius fully embraced the Baltic crusades, explicitly giving participants the same indulgence as that enjoyed

⁴² DD 1: 5, no. 61 (of 29 December 1215).

⁴³ Letter of 21 January 1205: *Die Register Innocenz' III.*, vol. 7, no. 203; translated and commented on in John C. Moore, *Pope Innocent III (1160/61–1216): To Root Up and to Plant* (Leiden, 2007), p. 138. For a discussion of Livonia in this letter, see Barbara Bombi, 'Innocent III and the Baltic Crusade after the Conquest of Constantinople' (forthcoming). See also Alfred J. Andrea, 'Innocent III, the Fourth Crusade, and the Coming Apocalypse', in *The Medieval Crusade*, ed. Susan J. Ridyard (Woodbridge, 2004), pp. 97–106 (here 101–2).

by crusaders going to the Holy Land and employing, as mentioned above, the full range of crusading terminology.⁴⁴

To Innocent a crusade was a devotional and penitential act that transcended specific locations and geographical distance. He regarded the crusade as a God-given universal opportunity for salvation.⁴⁵ This was perhaps most clearly stated in his call for the Fifth Crusade, *Quia maior* of April 1213, in which he proclaimed that God, being omnipotent, could easily return the Holy Land to the Christians if He so wished. However, at a time when so many had become weak in faith, He had decided to test the Christians, to summon them from the sleep of death and test their faith, to give them a means to gain salvation.⁴⁶ Innocent not only believed that God had set this task for the Christians; he also believed that God wanted all faithful to take it on. Innocent stated that the outcome of a crusade was determined by God and he believed that God's decision in turn was dependent on the number of faithful who showed penitence and supported the ventures.⁴⁷ Innocent therefore wished all Christians to take part in the crusade; indeed, he had, as Christoph Maier has stated, a far-reaching 'vision of a Christian society organized for the *negotium crucis*'.⁴⁸ It was of course not possible for everybody to take part in a military campaign, which is why Innocent promoted a series of measures

⁴⁴ Honorius, however, maintained that force should only be used in defence of the missionaries and their converts (following the teaching of canon law). For a detailed discussion of the Baltic policies of Honorius III, see my *The Popes and the Baltic Crusades*, chapter 3.

⁴⁵ See John Gilchrist, 'The Lord's War as the Proving Ground of Faith: Pope Innocent III and the Propagation of Violence (1198–1216)', in *Crusaders and Muslims in Twelfth Century Syria*, ed. Maya Shatzmiller (Leiden, 1993), pp. 65–83 (here 77–8).

⁴⁶ 'Poterat enim omnipotens deus terram illam si uellet omnino deffendere ne in manus traderetur hostiles posset et illam si uellet de minibus hostium facile liberare cum nichil possit eius resistere uoluntati. Sed cum iam superhabundasset iniquitas refrigescente caritate multorum ut fideles suos a sompno mortis ad uite stadium excitaret agonem illis proposuit in quo fidem eorum uelut aurum in fornace probaret occasionem salutis immo saluationis causam prestando ut qui fideliter pro ipso certauerint ab ipso feliciter coronentur et qui ei noluerint in tante necessitates articulo debite seruitutis impendere famulatum in nouissimo districti examinis die iustam mereantur dampnationis sententiam sustinere': letter of [19–29] April 1213: 'Urkundenbeilage', ed. Georgine Tangl, *Studien zum Register Innocenz' III*. (Weimar, 1929), pp. 88–97.

⁴⁷ See, for instance, Innocent's letter to Alfonso VIII of Castile after the victory at Las Navas de Tolosa: PL, 216, cols 703C–704D at 704B; also in *La documentación pontificia hasta Innocencio III (965–1216)*, ed. Demetrio Mansilla (Rome, 1955), no. 488 at p. 521; Christoph T. Maier, 'Mass, the Eucharist and the Cross: Innocent III and the Relocation of the Crusade', in *Pope Innocent III and his World*, pp. 351–60 (here 354–5).

⁴⁸ Maier, 'Mass, the Eucharist and the Cross', p. 352.

designed to allow those who were unable to participate actively to contribute in other ways. The most important ones were commutation and redemption of vows, as well as the grant of a partial indulgence to those who supported a crusade financially.⁴⁹

The wish to involve all Christians in the crusade movement also took another form, namely the staging of large intercessory ceremonies with processions and prayers in support of a specific crusade.⁵⁰ This can be illustrated by an event which Innocent organized in Rome in 1212 in support of a new Castilian campaign against the Muslims.

Throughout his pontificate Innocent had received a steady stream of news about the Iberian peninsula. He was particularly well informed about events in Castile and Leon due to the ongoing dispute between the papal court and the two kingdoms over the consanguineous marriage between Alfonso IX of León (r. 1188–1230) and Dona Berenguela of Castile (1180–1246) which generated a great deal of contact, including the dispatch in 1198 of a papal legate, as well as visits from Castilian and Leonese bishops who came to Rome to plead the royal case.⁵¹ The pope also closely followed the preparations for new Christian campaigns on the peninsula. Aware that Pedro II of Aragón (r. 1196–1213) was preparing an offensive against the ‘perfidious Saracens’, Innocent instructed the archbishop of Toledo and his suffragans to put pressure on King Alfonso VIII of Castile (r. 1158–1214) to follow Pedro’s example.⁵² Alfonso eventually decided to do so, and in late 1211 or early 1212 he informed the pope that he intended

⁴⁹ Maier, ‘Mass, the Eucharist and the Cross’, pp. 354–5; see also William E. Lunt, *Financial Relations of the Papacy with England to 1321* (Cambridge, MA, 1939). One formulation of the latter can be found in the crusade decree from the Fourth Lateran Council which established that ‘We also wish and concede that all should share in this remission of sins who, according to the quality of their aid and the depth of their devotion, donate a fitting proportion of their goods to the aid of the Holy Land or lend suitable counsel and aid’: *Ad liberandam* of 30 November 1215; *Conciliorum Oecumenicorum Decreta*, ed. Giuseppe Alberigo et al. (Basel, 1962), pp. 243–7; translated in Louise Riley-Smith and Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: Idea and Reality, 1095–1274* (London, 1981), p. 129.

⁵⁰ For earlier use of intercessory liturgies in connection with papal crusade calls, see Christoph T. Maier, ‘Crisis, Liturgy and the Crusade in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries’, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 48 (1997), 628–57, esp. 631–3.

⁵¹ O’Callaghan, ‘Innocent III’, pp. 319–25; Antonio García y García, ‘Innocent III and the Kingdom of Castile’ in *Pope Innocent III and his World*, pp. 337–50 (here 342). O’Callaghan (‘Innocent III’, p. 326) points out that Innocent was also concerned with the other Christian states of the peninsula, including Navarre and Portugal.

⁵² O’Callaghan, ‘Innocent III’, p. 328; *La documentación pontificia*, no. 416 (of 16 February 1210).

to launch his campaign against the Almohads the week after Pentecost (13–20 May 1212).⁵³

The intercessory ceremony in Rome took place on 16 May 1212 and was thus intended to coincide with the time of the battle in Spain.⁵⁴ The entire adult population of Rome were to take part – only those who had deadly enemies were excused.⁵⁵ The detailed plan for the procession has survived and shows that the event made full use of the symbolism of the cross. The Romans were to form three processions, each headed by a cross, and walk barefoot, praying and weeping, through the city. On the square outside the Lateran church, the pope would preach to them all, standing in front of the relic of the True Cross which had been brought from the Sancta Sanctorum. The event would finish with mass and special prayers of intercession.

After the victory at Las Navas de Tolosa on 16 July 1212, King Alfonso sent a triumphant account of the battle to Innocent III; according to Alberic of Trois Fontaines (d. c. 1252), his letter was presented to the pope along with the standard and tent of the defeated Almohad caliph, an-Nāsir (r. 1199–1213).⁵⁶ In response Innocent convened the clergy and people of Rome to offer thanks to God who had given His faithful this success.⁵⁷ The Romans were thus involved both in the spiritual preparations for the Iberian campaign and in the celebrations of the victory which their prayers had helped to bring about. They themselves had benefited from their participation in the procession: they had taken an active role in the spiritual crusade and were transformed from sinners to penitents and recipients of His absolution. By timing the procession to coincide with the launch of Alfonso's campaign, the pope bridged the geographical gap between

⁵³ O'Callaghan, 'Innocent III', p. 329; Alfonso's letter also contained an appeal for assistance (as seen from the papal reply of 31 January 1212: *La documentación pontificia*, no. 468); in response Innocent asked the French bishops to exhort their faithful to go to Spain in return for a plenary remission (*La documentación pontificia*, no. 468 of 31 January 1212; see also *La documentación pontificia*, no. 470 of 4 February 1212).

⁵⁴ Maier, 'Mass, the Eucharist and the Cross', pp. 352–3.

⁵⁵ 'Et ad hanc processionem omnes omnino moneantur venire, nec ab ea se quisquam excuset praeter illos qui habent inimicitias capitales': PL 216, col. 698D. The instructions are preserved in the papal registers (PL 216, cols 698C–699C), probably, as Christoph Maier ('Mass, the Eucharist and the Cross', p. 354) suggests, because Innocent wished them to serve as models for future intercessory events.

⁵⁶ Alberic of Trois Fontaines, *Chronica*, MGH SS 23, p. 895; see O'Callaghan, 'Innocent III', p. 333 with note 75 and Damian Smith, *Innocent III and the Crown of Aragon: The Limits of Papal Authority* (Aldershot, 2004), pp. 111–14. Alfonso's letter is in PL 216, cols 699C–703A, and in *La documentación pontificia*, no. 483.

⁵⁷ See Innocent's letter to Alfonso VIII: PL 216, 703C–704D at 704A; also in *La documentación pontificia*, no. 488 at p. 520.

the Iberian peninsula and Rome. He freed the Castilian crusade from its specific political and geographical location and turned it into a universal venture which potentially could work for the salvation of all Christians.

We do not know whether Innocent performed similar ceremonies in favour of the Baltic venture; none of the extant sources mentions such an event. However, when in 1215 he granted a partial indulgence to those who supported the Baltic campaigns financially, he allowed those who were unable to travel to Livonia themselves to become part of the meritorious fight for the new plantation of the faith and thus to partake in the spiritual reward without participating actively in the campaign.⁵⁸ Indeed, he made it clear that the persecution of the new converts in Livonia was another God-given opportunity to gain salvation for both warriors and non-combatants.

Innocent certainly counted the conversions in Livonia among the 'achievements of the Apostolic See', as Barbara Bombi points out: the new faithful in Livonia were among that 'great multitude of fish' (*multitudinum piscium copiosam*) which had now accepted the authority of the Latin Christian church, along with the Greeks.⁵⁹ The conversion of the peoples of Livonia was thus seen as a light in the darkness, as an important step in the realization of the papal plans – or hopes – for both unification and expansion of Christendom.⁶⁰ The pope may, however, have been somewhat misinformed about the progress of the mission: his mention of Livonia in *Evangelica docente Scriptura* suggests that the reports from Livonia were more hopeful than the situation on the ground called for. According to the *Gesta Innocentii*, the Danish Archbishop Anders Sunesen of Lund certainly sent a very optimistic report after his stay in Riga in the winter of 1206/07, stating that 'all of Livonia' now had been converted.⁶¹ On the whole the curia was not well informed about people and events in the eastern Baltic region, as it had to rely on biased and fragmented information from its few supplicants. Innocent III regarded Livonia and the people working for its

⁵⁸ This was granted in *Alto diuine* of 29 December 1215: DD, 1: 5, no. 61.

⁵⁹ Quote from Bombi, 'Innocent III and the Baltic Crusade after the Conquest of Constantinople'; Latin quote from letter of 21 January 1205: *Die Register Innocenz' III.*, 7, no. 203, p. 355, line 26.

⁶⁰ See the discussion in Bombi, 'Innocent III and the Baltic Crusade after the Conquest of Constantinople'.

⁶¹ *Gesta Innocentii* VIII: 'Interea venit ad ipsum [Innocent III] relatio ex parte Lundensis archiepiscopi, quem legatum direxerat ad convertendos paganos, quod tota Livonia erat ad fidem Christi conversa, nullusque in ipsa remanserat qui non recepisset sacramentum baptismatis, vicinis gentibus ad hoc ipsum ex magna parte paratis': David Richard Gress-Wright, *The 'Gesta Innocentii III': Text, Introduction and Commentary* (unpublished PhD thesis, Bryn Mawr College, 1981), p. 315, lines 11–16. Anders's report has not survived. For his stay in Riga, see HCL X.13, p. 62 and HCL XI.1, p. 68.

conquest and conversion as being 'very far away' (*in remotis partibus*), and in his letters he gave only very vague descriptions of the Baltic lands and peoples.⁶² The geographical layout of the region clearly escaped him. This occasionally led to confusion. Thus in 1213 the pope was asked, probably by the Sword Brethren, to create a new bishopric in the provinces of Saccala and Ugaunia in southern Estonia. These lands were actually part of the Estonian church province, but the curial officers only realized this when Theodoric, now bishop of Estonia, quickly hurried to Rome to lay claim to them.⁶³

This was largely due to the fact that Innocent never saw occasion to dispatch a legate from the curia to Livonia.⁶⁴ It was not curial practice to send legates simply to gather information. Legates were dispatched to implement papal decisions and to mediate in conflicts deemed to be damaging to papal policy and/or Christendom; acquiring new information about the legatine field was merely a secondary purpose. There were, however, several conflicts in the Baltic missionary field which were potentially detrimental for the missionary work and the extension of Christendom. Two of the major players in the conquest and conversion of Livonia, namely the bishop of Riga and the Sword Brethren, competed for land and power in the newly converted Livonian and southern Estonian lands and, in the absence of a secular overlord, appealed to the curia to mediate in their many disputes. In 1210 both Albert and Master Volkwin thus went to Rome to argue their case. In the subsequent years messengers representing the two parties – and soon also the citizens of Riga – frequently visited the curia,

⁶² Quote from letter of 11 October 1213: LUB 1/1, no. 31; it should be noted that the pope here most likely subscribes to a view presented to him by the Sword Brethren.

⁶³ Letter of 11 October 1213: LUB 1/1, no. 29. The previous year the Sword Brethren had made another unsuccessful attempt at getting their own bishopric (LUB 1/1, no. 24). See also Benninghoven, *Der Orden der Schwertbrüder*, pp. 130–33, and Johansen, *Nordische Mission*, p. 102. Another example is a letter, also of 1213, in which the curia appears to erroneously place the island of Gotland under the province of Lund: LUB 1/1, no. 31 (of 11 October 1213); see also DD 1: 5, p. 61.

⁶⁴ During his pontificate, Innocent dispatched more than 100 legatine missions – mainly to the 'heartlands' of Latin Christian Europe such as France and Italy, but also to the British Isles in the north, to the Iberian kingdoms in the west, and to Bulgaria, Constantinople and the Kingdom of Jerusalem in the east: see Heinrich Zimmermann, *Die päpstliche Legation in der ersten Hälfte des 13. Jahrhunderts* (Paderborn, 1913), pp. 296–304. These were legates sent from the curia; I exclude 'native' legates (who in the thirteenth century came to be called *legatus natus*); for an overview of the various types of legates, see Ian Stuart Robinson, *The Papacy 1073–1198* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 147–9, and Karl Ruess, *Die rechtliche Stellung der päpstlichen Legaten bis Bonifaz VIII.* (Paderborn, 1912), pp. 103–15. Innocent sometimes refused requests for legates, as when in 1211 he declined Alfonso VIII's petition for a legate (*La documentación pontificia*, no. 447).

putting forward mutual accusations of power abuse, mistreatment of the new converts and greed.⁶⁵ Nevertheless, Innocent's curia did not find it necessary to send a legate to inspect the situation before mediating between the rivals. Legate William of Modena was only dispatched in early 1225 after repeated pressure and a specific request from the Livonian church.⁶⁶ Until then, the conversion of Livonia was a matter of great symbolic significance and encouragement to the Roman curia, but the region and the events unfolding there remained distant and faraway, truly at the periphery of Christendom.

Throughout his chronicle Henry strives to demonstrate how the efforts of the Livonian church received papal favour and support. In the process he gives us a unique insight into the interaction between the papal curia and its petitioners, showing us the strategies, hopes and wishes of one of its keenest supplicants. His description of the close interaction between Rome and Riga is supported by the epistolary evidence. The papal letters reveal, however, that Innocent III's curia and those who worked for the conquest and conversion of Livonia and Estonia perceived the Baltic venture somewhat differently. Indeed, the Livonian missionaries may not have been entirely pleased with the character and extent of the response from Innocent III. But Henry glosses over any such disappointment – as he would, since it would not have suited his wish to eulogize the Livonian church and its work. The Livonian clergy would, however, have been more satisfied with the response from Innocent's successor, Honorius III: a papal legate was dispatched to their lands, and they finally saw the Livonian campaigns explicitly elevated to parity with crusades in the East.

⁶⁵ See footnote 6 above.

⁶⁶ This legatine mission was yet another expression of the persistency with which Bishop Albert pursued his agenda. He was very keen to have his see elevated to metropolitan status and had repeatedly petitioned the curia for this; it was probably also a central element in his request for a papal legate; see HCL XXIX.2, p. 316; LUB 1/1, nos 44 and 47 (of 26 October and 7 November 1219); *Regesta Honorii Papae III*, ed. Pietro Pressutti, 2 vols (Rome, 1888–1905), vol. 2, no. 4633 (of 23 December 1223) (full text in *Registra Vaticana* vol. 12, fol. 130: epist. 140); see also William L. Urban, *The Baltic Crusade*, 2nd edn (Chicago, 1994), pp. 121–2.

Chapter 9

The Notion of a Missionary Theatre: The *ludus magnus* of Henry of Livonia's Chronicle

Nils Holger Petersen

A brief passage in the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia refers to a *ludus magnus*, a large-scale or 'elaborate play', performed in Riga at the turn of the thirteenth century in order to teach the Christian faith to the pagans.¹ This chapter discusses the possible historical implications of this *ludus magnus* in the light of current scholarship dealing with so-called 'liturgical drama' in the Middle Ages. Recently, a few historians and other non-specialists have discussed the passage within the general context of medieval drama, one in particular interpreting *ludus magnus* as relating to 'liturgical drama as missionary theatre'.² Neither 'missionary theatre' nor 'liturgical drama' are, however, terms found in medieval texts and both raise certain problems in view of ongoing and fundamental historiographical discussions in the field of liturgical drama over the past 40 years or so.³ These

¹ 'De ludo magno, qui fuit in Riga', HCL IX.14, p. 32. The passage is cited in its entirety below in footnote 27.

² Brenda Bolton, 'Message, Celebration, Offering: The Place of Twelfth- and Early Thirteenth-Century Liturgical Drama as "Missionary Theatre"', in *Continuity and Change in Christian Worship*, ed. Robert N. Swanson (Studies in Church History 35) (Woodbridge, 1999), pp. 89–103.

³ For recent accounts, see C. Clifford Flanigan, 'Medieval Liturgy and the Arts: Visitatio Sepulchri as Paradigm', in *Liturgy and the Arts in the Middle Ages: Studies in Honour of C. Clifford Flanigan*, ed. Eva Louise Lillie and Nils Holger Petersen (Copenhagen, 1996), pp. 9–35; Michal Kobialka, *This Is My Body: Representational Practices in the Early Middle Ages* (Ann Arbor, 1999); Nils Holger Petersen, 'Liturgical Drama: New Approaches', in *Bilan et Perspectives des Études Médiévales (1993–1998): Actes du 2ème Congrès Européen d'Études Médiévales*, ed. Jacqueline Hamesse (Turnhout, 2004), pp. 625–44; and Nils Holger Petersen, 'Representation in European Devotional Rituals: The Question of the Origin of Medieval Drama in Medieval Liturgy', in *The Origins of Theatre in Ancient Greece and Beyond: From Ritual to Drama*, ed. Eric Csapo and Margaret C. Miller (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 329–60.

discussions focus specifically on the relationship between 'liturgy' and 'drama', and suggest some historical narratives from the study of which medieval connections between the two areas may be constructed. Since Henry's passage about the *ludus magnus* raises many questions about what actually took place, it seems justified to discuss the notions which were used in the text to characterize the event, and to contextualize them in the light of the most recent relevant scholarship concerning medieval devotional and representational performative practices. I shall begin by summarizing – albeit briefly – the history of the scholarship dealing with the terminological and genre-oriented problems concerning the (modern) notion of liturgical drama.

The Idea of Liturgical Drama

The term 'liturgical drama' goes back to the mid-nineteenth century when it was used in an attempt to define the special nature of sung Latin dialogues, found in liturgical manuscripts, usually representing enactments of biblical narratives, and sometimes the legends of the saints. In 1860, Edmond de Coussemaker published textual and musical editions of 22 such 'dramas'. He included a theoretical introduction, discussing and proposing a terminology which distinguished between texts clearly embedded in the liturgy and those written with a somewhat freer relation to the liturgy, although still devotional in content and intention. To the first, he applied the notion of liturgical drama in a strict sense. Texts from the second group – mainly to be found after the twelfth century – he called 'mysteries' (*mystères*).⁴ Broadly speaking, Coussemaker's distinctions have prevailed in scholarship up to the present time, including the overarching idea of a history of the theatre with a new beginning in the medieval liturgy after the gradual extinction of classical theatre during the first five Christian centuries, not least through the condemnations of the Church Fathers, notably including Tertullian (*De spectaculis*, c. 200), and St Augustine (*Confessiones*, 397–98).⁵ This idea, explicitly present in Coussemaker's constructions but also

⁴ *Drames liturgiques du moyen âge (texte et musique)*, ed. Edmond de Coussemaker (Paris, 1860). See Nils Holger Petersen, 'The Concept of Liturgical Drama: Coussemaker and Modern Scholarship', in *Ars musica septentrionalis*, ed. Barbara Haggh-Huglo and Frédéric Billiet (Paris, 2011), pp. 59–73.

⁵ For general introductions to medieval theatre history and – in particular – the condemnation of theatre in Christian Antiquity (with further references), see William Tydeman, *The Theatre in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1978), esp. pp. 22–7; and Glynne Wickham, *The Medieval Theatre*, 3rd edn (Cambridge, 1987), esp. pp. 20–21. See also Egon Wellesz, *A History of Byzantine Music and Hymnography*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1961), pp. 78–

more generally in his own day, was further developed in various ways, sometimes emphasizing the opposition between the church and the theatre. Around the turn of the twentieth century, one version of such an account was formulated which – although largely abandoned today by scholars of drama – is still occasionally encountered and which undoubtedly has informed general opinion about medieval theatre in wider circles. In 1903, E.K. Chambers introduced the notion of liturgical drama into a large-scale historical narrative with a point of departure in the disappearance of the theatre ‘at the break-up of the Roman world’.⁶ In spite of the perceived hostility of Christianity towards anything theatrical, Chambers acknowledged what he termed ‘dramatic tendencies of Christian worship’ which had ‘the potentiality of dramatic development’. The Easter trope *Quem quaeritis* – representing in dialogue the encounter of the women at the empty tomb on Easter Day with the angelic message of Christ’s Resurrection – thus became the occasion at which ‘liturgical drama was born’. This justified Chambers’s previous announcement of ‘a most singular new birth of the drama in the very bosom of the Church’s own ritual’.⁷ The difficulty of this narrative, of course, lies in explaining why Christianity, being hostile to theatre, could produce a ‘new birth of the drama’. For this reason, Chambers had to assume either that the church attempted ‘to wrest the pomps of the devil to a spiritual service’, or the presence of some inherent ‘barred human instinct’ which had made its way into the liturgy: in both cases, in spite of general ecclesiastical attitudes and not because of them.⁸ This version of an historical narrative of the history of the theatre – although no longer generally accepted in such a rigid outline – has formed an important background for modern difficulties in sorting out what kind of performative act these liturgical dramas might be.⁹

97 for a discussion of the Church Fathers and their attitudes towards musical and theatrical representation.

⁶ Edmund Kerchever Chambers, *The Mediaeval Stage* (London, 1903; repr. Mineola, NY, 1996), II.3, p. 2.

⁷ Chambers, *The Mediaeval Stage*, vol. 2, pp. 3, 6, 10, and 2.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁹ Karl Young, *The Drama of the Medieval Church*, 2 vols (London, 1933), builds on a historiography similar to that of Chambers although his material is presented with less anti-clericalism and many more nuances. O.B. Hardison’s *Christian Rite and Christian Drama in the Middle Ages* (Baltimore, 1965) took issue with this historiography in such a way that his book may be considered a new departure in the scholarship of ‘liturgical drama’, claiming that ‘liturgical drama’ grew out of the liturgical understanding of the ninth century. These two protagonists within this branch of scholarship have fundamentally influenced all later discussions of the practices in question. See references to selected recent publications in the next footnote.

Two particular problems should be emphasized. Firstly, since notions of 'drama' and the 'dramatic' do not occur in medieval sources for liturgical drama, any use of these – and similar – terms cannot avoid, at least to some extent, reflecting modern theatre experience. When analysing the early *Quem quaeritis* ceremonies, little can be found which points to any contemporary awareness of something like the 'dramatic'. In recent scholarship too, the methods of historical anthropology have been convincingly brought to bear on such texts, interpreting them as phenomena with religious and ritualistic rather than theatrical functions.¹⁰ Even so, few would deny some kind of continuity between certain performative medieval liturgical practices and later forms of theatre.¹¹

Second, during the twelfth century, some practices considered under the heading of liturgical drama were clearly perceived as entertainment and were thus closer in approach to the later theatrical idea than to the earlier and more 'liturgical' *Quem quaeritis* ceremonies, although they usually remained devotional in character. The *Danielis ludus*, or 'Play of Daniel', composed at the cathedral school in Beauvais and preserved in a thirteenth-century manuscript, is one example of a 'ludus' combining devotional entertainment and ritual function.¹² Certainly not everything, however, which has been termed liturgical drama appears to have been used or understood in such ways. In Coussemaker's day, criticism was already being raised in response to his general two-part division of medieval religious dramas into 'liturgical' and 'mystery plays': on the

¹⁰ For modern approaches to 'liturgical drama' in general, see footnote 3 above, and further C. Clifford Flanigan, 'Comparative Literature and the Study of Medieval Drama', *Yearbook of Comparative and General Literature* 35 (1986), 56–104; C. Clifford Flanigan, 'Medieval Latin Music-drama', in *The Theatre of Medieval Europe: New Research in Early Drama*, ed. Eckehard Simon (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 21–41; Nils Holger Petersen, 'The Representational Liturgy of the *Regularis Concordia*', in *The White Mantle of Churches: Architecture, Liturgy, and Art Around the Millenium*, ed. Nigel Hiscock (Turnhout, 2003), pp. 107–17; and Nils Holger Petersen, 'Biblical Reception, Representational Ritual, and the Question of "Liturgical Drama"', in *Sapientia et eloquentia*, ed. Gunilla Iversen and Nicolas Bell (Turnhout, 2009), pp. 163–201.

¹¹ C. Clifford Flanigan, 'The Fleury Playbook, the Traditions of Medieval Latin Drama, and Modern Scholarship', in *The Fleury Playbook: Essays and Studies*, ed. Thomas P. Campbell and Clifford Davidson (Kalamazoo, 1985), pp. 1–25; and C. Clifford Flanigan, 'Medieval Liturgy and the Arts'; Nils Holger Petersen, '*Danielis ludus* and the Latin Music Dramatic Traditions of the Middle Ages', in *The Past in the Present: Papers Read at the IMS Intercongressional Symposium and the 10th Meeting of the Cantus Planus, Budapest & Visegrád, 2000*, ed. László Doboszay, 2 vols (Budapest, 2003), vol. 2, pp. 291–307.

¹² Margot Fassler, 'The Feast of Fools and *Danielis Ludus*: Popular Tradition in a Medieval Cathedral Play', in *Plainsong in the Age of Polyphony*, ed. Thomas Forrest Kelly (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 65–99; see also Petersen, '*Danielis ludus* and the Latin Music Dramatic Traditions'.

one hand, a too-rigid separation, and on the other too broad a set of categories.¹³ The question is whether a broad concept such as liturgical drama is even possible or useful, or whether we are faced with such differences regarding the variety of these performative practices, even if they share features in common, that the overall term loses all meaning.

Many problems arise from the differences in wording which occur in manuscript rubrics for the ceremonies in question. There is no overall consistency and, in general, manuscripts provide only partial information about the performance of ceremonies. For the so-called liturgical dramas, whenever both text and music for the dialogue has survived, as often happens, there is little or no evidence as to how each was meant to be carried out (whether through stage directions or rubrics). Occasionally, more elaborate rubrics can be found, but then more often than not only *incipits* of the dialogue and its music. What could be termed full information about a ceremony almost never occurs. However, the wording of rubrics, which belong rather to the terminology of liturgical manuscripts in general, such as *ordo ad processionem*, *ordo ad visitandum sepulchrum*, or just *ad introitum* or the like, give very different signals from designations of *ludus* or *ordo ad repraesentandem Herodem*.¹⁴ In spite of such common markers of types of ceremonies, it is still not easy to classify the practices to which they refer, either because of our lack of detailed information or the inconsistent use of terms.

The *ludus magnus* in Medieval Drama Scholarship

The *ludus magnus* of Riga in Henry's chronicle has not been accorded a prominent place in the recent literature of medieval drama, although a few scholars do mention it.¹⁵ In 1989, Reinhard Schneider, in passing, assessed the textual

¹³ See footnote 3 above and the first part of Charles Magnin's review of Coussemaker's *Drames liturgiques* in *Journal des Savants* (May 1860), 309–19 (esp. 312–13 and 316–17).

¹⁴ See the discussion in Wickham, *Medieval Theatre*, pp. 36 and 43. The rubric 'ordo ad repraesentandem Herodem' is the designation of a large text in the twelfth-century so-called Fleury Playbook, usually considered as an Epiphany play: see Petersen, 'Biblical Reception', p. 176; 'ordo ad visitandum sepulchrum' is found in a rubric for a Danish thirteenth-century fragment of a breviary containing a *Quem quaeritis* ceremony: see Nils Holger Petersen, 'Another *Visitatio Sepulchri* from Scandinavia', in *The Dramatic Tradition of the Middle Ages*, ed. Clifford Davidson (New York, 2005), reprinted with a slightly revised transcription from *The Early Drama, Art, and Music Review* 14/1 (1991), 16–24 (here 21).

¹⁵ Young, *The Drama*, vol. 2, p. 542; See the account in Reinhard Schneider, 'Straßentheater im Missionseinsatz: Zu Heinrichs von Lettland Bericht über ein großes Spiel

treatment of the *ludus magnus* passage in drama scholarship up to that date.¹⁶ Schneider points – without specification – to textual problems in the oldest edition of the chronicle, by Johann Daniel Gruber in 1740 (entitled the *Gesta* of bishop Albert).¹⁷ Further, he comments on Wilhelm Creizenach's version of the passage in his *Geschichte des neueren Dramas* (1911) which – erroneously – included an interpolation of a Humanist gloss *quem Latini Comoediam vocant* to characterize the notion *ludus prophetarum* in the beginning of the passage.¹⁸

Karl Young quoted Creizenach's text (but also referred to Gruber); and the passage was quoted from Young – who to this day has preserved an almost canonical status in the scholarship of liturgical drama – even in a recent volume on medieval theatre, in spite of the existence of a modern critical edition of the chronicle.¹⁹ Here, an excerpt of the *ludus magnus* passage from Henry's chronicle appeared under the heading 'An audience is frightened by the fighting, Riga, 1204'.²⁰ According to Tydeman: 'An account of a Latin play staged at Riga in 1204 illustrates both the proselytising incentive for popular religious performances – "in order that those of the heathen persuasion might learn the rudiments of the Christian faith through the evidence of their own eyes" – and the potential crowd control problems inherent in couching them in an unfamiliar tongue.'²¹

Brenda Bolton translated the *ludus magnus* passage from the Gruber edition and her version does not contain the mentioned interpolated gloss.²² Bolton cited it together with a well-known passage from *Cum decorum*, Innocent III's (r. 1198–1216) letter of 8 January 1207 to Henry, archbishop of Gniezno (r.

in Riga 1205', in *Studien über die Anfänge der Mission in Livland*, ed. Manfred Hellmann (Sigmaringen, 1989), pp. 107–21 (here 108–11).

¹⁶ Schneider, 'Straßentheater', pp. 108–9.

¹⁷ *Gesta Alberti Livoniensis Episcopi*, in *Origines Livoniae sacrae et civilis*, ed. Johann Daniel Gruber (Frankfurt and Leipzig, 1740), p. 34.

¹⁸ Schneider, 'Straßentheater', pp. 108–9; Wilhelm Creizenach, *Geschichte des neueren Dramas*, 2nd edn, 3 vols (Halle, 1911–23), vol. 1, pp. 64–5. Also Regula Meyer Eviit, 'Undoing the Dramatic History of the Riga *Ludus Prophetarum*', *Comparative Drama* 25/3 (1991), 242–56, pointed, independently as it seems, to the corruption of the text in the version used by Karl Young and in much later scholarship relying on his edition, referring among others to C. Clifford Flanagan's brief comment in his 'The Fleury *Playbook*', p. 19 (see footnote 11 above).

¹⁹ Young, *The Drama*, vol. 2, p. 542; *The Medieval European Stage: 500–1550*, ed. William Tydeman (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 180–81.

²⁰ 'This winter [1204] a prophet play (in the manner which the Latins call comedy) was performed in the middle of Riga ...', *The Medieval European Stage*, ed. Tydeman, pp. 180–81.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

²² Bolton, 'Message, Celebration, Offering', pp. 97–8.

1199–1219), condemning abuses in the form of theatrical plays in churches.²³ Bolton criticizes what she construes as a general tendency in liturgical drama scholarship to make Innocent a villain because of his perceived negativity toward acting in churches.²⁴ For her, Innocent's letter contextualizes the *ludus magnus* of Henry's chronicle; the critical content of Innocent's letter is interpreted as a wish to counteract 'the dangers of possible misuse of liturgical drama,' but at the same time is also seen in a wider context as an attempt to develop 'liturgical drama particularly in the mission field.'²⁵ Below, I shall further discuss the question of how Innocent's letter may help us contextualize the description of the *ludus magnus* in Henry's chronicle.

Schneider argues for a dating of the performance of the play in the winter of 1205/06. Henry's brief notice on the play was thus written some 20 years after the event.²⁶

The *ludus magnus*

In what follows, I examine the passage from Henry's chronicle to see what information or hints may be found in it and introduce contextually relevant information about church plays or enactments at the time. Here is the passage in Brundage's English translation:

That same winter a very elaborate play of the prophets was performed in the middle of Riga in order that the pagans might learn the rudiments of the Christian faith by an ocular demonstration. The subject of this play was most diligently explained to both converts and pagans through an interpreter. When, however, the army of Gideon fought the Philistines, the pagans began to take flight, fearing lest they be killed, but they were quietly called back. Thus, therefore, the church grew hushed and peaceful in a short time. This play was like a prelude and prophecy of the future; for in the same play there were wars, namely those of David, Gideon, and Herod, and there was the doctrine of the Old and New Testaments. Certainly, through the many wars that followed, the pagans were to be converted and,

²³ *Die Register Innocenz' III*, vol. 9: *Pontifikatsjahr, 1206/1207: Texte und Indices*, ed. Andrea Sommerlechner et al. (Vienna, 2004), pp. 405–6.

²⁴ Bolton, 'Message, Celebration, Offering', pp. 91–2.

²⁵ Bolton, 'Message, Celebration, Offering', p. 103.

²⁶ Schneider, 'Straßentheater', pp. 108–13. Similarly Evitt, 'Undoing the Dramatic History', p. 244.

through the doctrine of the Old and New Testaments, they were to be told how they might attain to the true Peacemaker and eternal life.²⁷

In the very first place, mention of a *ludus prophetarum* and an *interpretes* to explain the performance gives the impression of a Latin play. Indeed, *ludus prophetarum* may perhaps be read as pointing in the direction of a genre within liturgical drama, namely, the 'prophet play' or *ordo prophetarum*.²⁸ Already, however, some caution is required. Not only does the word *ludus* seem to point in quite another direction to *ordo*, but also we might well ask if the *interpretes* necessarily translated from Latin? Could it not equally well have been from German or from a mixture of Latin and German? One could even imagine that an entertainment representing various biblical situations was simply explained to the audience, in sermon-like exposition without the representation necessarily being given with words. Whether as a translation from German or Latin, or as a summarizing explanation, the 'interpretation' would have had to address the local population in their Livish language.²⁹

If the play was performed out of doors, as Reinhard Schneider has reasonably argued in the light of the armies and battles represented,³⁰ it is difficult to imagine how this was effected in Riga's hard winter. Latin plays would normally be sung; however, the word *ludus* bears an association extending beyond liturgical ceremonies to the medieval legacy of the theatre of Antiquity which,

²⁷ HCL IX.14, p. 32; Brundage, p. 53: 'De ludo magno, qui fuit in Riga. Eadem hyeme factus est ludus prophetarum ordinatissimus in media Riga, ut fidei christiane rudimenta gentilitas fide disceret oculata. Cuius ludi materia tam neophitis quam paganis, qui aderant, per interpretem diligentissime exponebatur. Ubi autem armati Gedeonis cum Phylisteis pugnabant, pagani timentes occidi fugere ceperunt, sed caute sunt revocati. Sic ergo ad modicum tempus siluit ecclesia in pace quiescendo. Iste autem ludus quasi prelude et presagium erat futurorum. Nam in eodem ludo erant bella, utpote David, Gedeonis, Herodis; erat et doctrina Veteris et Novi Testamenti, quia nimirum per bella plurima que sequuntur convertenda erat gentilitas, et per doctrinam Veteris ac Novi Testamenti erat instruenda, qualiter ad verum pacificum et ad vitam perveniat eternam.'

²⁸ See Young, *The Drama*, vol. 2, pp. 125–71, who says, in a chapter entitled 'The Procession of Prophets': 'Among the several separate groups of dramatic performances designed for the Christmas season there remains for consideration a small body of pieces, presented on Christmas Day or a week later, containing utterances of the prophets concerning the coming of Christ. A convenient medieval designation for this kind of play is *Ordo Prophetarum*' (p. 125). As Young remarks (n. 1 on p. 125), this designation is actually found in a medieval rubric for such a prophet play.

²⁹ See Chapter 4 by Alan V. Murray in this volume, pp. 108–9. Murray comments on the possible meaning of the '*per interpretem*' in the *ludus magnus* passage of Henry's chronicle and discusses the languages used by the native populations of the eastern Baltic region.

³⁰ Schneider, 'Straßentheater', p. 112.

even after the 'collapse' of the theatre, still made itself felt, certainly in terms of archaeological remains and in a preserved Latin vocabulary:

It is thus not only the physical remains of Roman theatres and amphitheatres which continued to stand in the early Middle Ages as witnesses to Roman notions of entertainment, but also a large vocabulary of words and phrases which could never be wholly divorced from their original meanings. Of these words, *ludus* eclipses all others in importance since it can be translated with equal justification as 'recreation', as 'game' or as 'play', and since the significance of these English words to medieval drama is obvious enough.³¹

The use of the word *ludus* to refer to a play does not necessarily mean that the enactment did not contain liturgical material or that it was not performed in a manner heavily dependent on the liturgy. An example of the latter is the use of the word *ludus* for the large-scale *Danielis ludus* from Beauvais.³²

Although the term *ordo prophetarum* is mentioned in a medieval rubric, this does not provide the basis for considering it a generic term in the Middle Ages. Young used the term as a category for sung enactments in liturgical books, the earliest dating from the eleventh century, and based on sections of a pseudo-Augustinian sermon, *Contra Judaeos, Paganos, et Arianos. Sermo de Symbolo*, probably composed in the fifth or sixth century. However, as with many so-called practices of liturgical drama, the *ordo prophetarum* does not seem to have evolved in a straight line from one original adaptation of (a part of) that text.³³ In these processions or plays, each of a number of prophets and other witnesses come forth to testify to the truth of Christianity. A list of such witnesses from a text by St Martial de Limoges of the eleventh or twelfth century consists of the figures of Israel, Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Habakkuk, David, Simeon, Elizabeth, John the Baptist, Virgil, Nebuchadnezzar and the Sibyl. The list may

³¹ Wickham, *The Medieval Theatre*, p. 2.

³² The designation *Danielis ludus* appears both in the rubric before the play, in the unique manuscript in which it has been preserved, and in the prologue; see *The Play of Daniel: Critical Essays*, ed. Dunbar H. Ogden (Kalamazoo, MI, 1996), p. 91 (transcription), p. 117 (translation) and p. 133 (facsimile of the beginning of the play).

³³ Young, *The Drama*, vol. 2, pp. 125–71. See also Clyde Brockett, Jr, 'A Previously Unknown *Ordo Prophetarum* in a Manuscript Fragment in Zagreb', in *Medieval Drama on the Continent of Europe*, ed. Clifford Davidson and John H. Stroupe (Kalamazoo, MI, 1993), pp. 114–27. Brockett concludes: 'This manuscript fragment provides further evidence that there is not simply one tradition in words and music for the *Ordo Prophetarum* ... the plays with their music seem more likely to have developed by geographically based "traditions," as we have in relatively recent years come to view them.' (p. 125).

seem surprising but only deviates from the pseudo-Augustinian sermon by including Israel and omitting Zacharias.³⁴

The biblical figures mentioned in Henry's description are, however, as Schneider correctly emphasizes, not those which one would expect in a 'prophet play', although he does not relate the text to the tradition of the *ordo prophetarum*.³⁵ For him, Henry's text is seemingly inconsistent in this respect: whereas David and Herod are kings, Gideon is a judge; furthermore, Herod stands out as a negative figure, a persecutor. However, such a claim of inconsistency could be raised against the plays of the *ordo prophetarum* which do not present consistently defined categories of biblical characters. Two New Testament figures in these plays, namely Elizabeth and John the Baptist, may appear incongruous as Elizabeth is not normally seen as a prophet. Amongst the other figures, Nebuchadnezzar, Virgil and the Sibyl stand apart – an unlikely alliance between an Old Testament 'outsider' and highly significant figures from classical Antiquity.³⁶

Altogether, the prophetic basis of the *ludus magnus* could conceivably make sense by comparison with the *ordo prophetarum*. This is the line which Regula Meyer Evitt pursues, reading the description in a context of contemporary discourses concerning Jews and Christians.³⁷ Even so, the *ludus*, with its apparently realistic representations of wars, was a very different kind of performance from those prophetic and poetic messages of the procession of prophets in the *ordo prophetarum*. Finally, with regard to the *ludus magnus* as a prophet play, it is not clear whether the three biblical figures of Gideon, David and Herod are the only such prophetic voices in the play.

Representing large-scale battles – something inferred from the description of scared and fleeing pagans – does not appear to have been common in Latin plays or ceremonies, judging by surviving texts, although such criticisms of theatrical practices in the church during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries – depending on their interpretation – may shed a different light on this question. Innocent III voiced such criticism in his letter to Henry of Gniezno as follows:

³⁴ Young, *The Drama*, vol. 2, pp. 138–43, esp. 143.

³⁵ Schneider, 'Straßentheater', p. 114.

³⁶ The Sibyl foretells the coming of Christ in the reign of Octavian Augustus. Cassius Dio, *Historiarum Romanarum quae supersunt* (Berlin, 1898), 280 (Lib. XLVIII, ch. 43.4); Ernest Cary, *Dio's Roman History* (London and New York, 1917), p. 311.

³⁷ Evitt, 'Undoing the Dramatic History', pp. 247–51. Although the author takes the differences between *ordo* and *ludus* into consideration, the representation of war as described in the text of the chronicle is not brought into her discussion.

From time to time theatrical entertainments are put on in these same churches and not only are masked shows introduced into them as playful spectacles but also in three feasts of the year which follow directly after the Nativity of Christ, deacons, priests and subdeacons in turn, exercising their scandalous stupidities, through the obscene revellings of their behaviour, make clerical dignity worthless in the sight of the people which ought rather to be appeased at this time by the preaching of the words of God. Therefore, out of the duty brought upon us, the zeal for the house of God makes us grieve and the disgrace of those who have brought this about are recognized to fall upon us. We entrust to your brotherhood by apostolic writing that the honour of the church shall not be stained by such infamy, ... indeed, you must take care to tear away by the root the above-mentioned habit of playfulness or rather corruption from your churches so that you can establish yourselves as zealous lovers of the divine cult and holy order.³⁸

Innocent's exhortation to Henry was included in Gregory IX's (r. 1227–41) *Decretals* in 1234 and provided with the following gloss:

By this, however, it is not forbidden to represent the stable of the Lord, Herod, the Magi, and how Rachel wept for her children etc, which are associated with these feasts about which mention is made here, when such things lead men rather to devotion than to licentiousness or sensual pleasure – as at Easter, the sepulchre of the Lord and other things are represented for the exciting of devotion.³⁹

³⁸ Translation partly quoted from a shorter excerpt in *The Medieval European Stage*, ed. Tydeman, p. 114. *Die Register Innocenz' III.*, pp. 405–6; PL 215, cols 1070–71: 'Interdum ludi fiunt in eisdem ecclesiis theatrales, et non solum ad ludibriorum spectacula introducuntur in eas monstra larvarum, verum etiam in tribus anni festivitibus, quae continue Natalem Christi sequuntur diaconi, presbyteri ac subdiaconi vicissim insaniae suae ludibria exercentes, per gesticulationum suarum debacchationes obscenas, in conspectu populi, decus faciunt clericale vilesce, quem potius illo tempore verbi Dei deberet praedicatione mulcere. Quia igitur ex officio nobis injuncto, zelus domus Dei nos comedit, et opprobria exprobrantium ei super nos cadere dignoscuntur, [fraternitati vestrae per apostolica scripta mandamus,] quatenus, ne per huiusmodi turpitudinem Ecclesiae inquinetur honestas, (...) praelibatam vero ludibriorum consuetudinem, vel potius corruptelam, curetis ab ecclesiis vestris taliter extirpare, quod vos divini cultus et sacri comprobetis ordinis zelatores.'

³⁹ *The Medieval European Stage*, ed. Tydeman, p. 114; Young, *The Drama*, vol. 2, pp. 416–17: 'Non tamen hoc prohibetur representare presepe Domini, Herodem, Magos et qualiter Rachel plorat filios suos, et cetera, que tangunt festiuitates illas de quibus hic fit mentio, cum talia potius inducant homines ad compunctionem quam ad lasciuiam vel voluptatem, sicut in Pasca sepulcrum Domini et alia representantur ad deuotionem excitandam.'

Unfortunately we simply do not know what kind of performances Innocent was reacting against. However, the comments in his letter and the gloss are interestingly contextualized by a text written by Herrad of Landsberg (1125/30–95), abess of Hohenburg, in the late twelfth century:

Thus for the Nativity of Christ, his appearance and the mystical gifts of the Magi, his circumcision, his journey into Jerusalem on a donkey to the praise of the people and with green palm-branches, and the two disciples in Emmaus, a certain church, in order to imitate the [divine] vestiges, has fixed the ceremonies to be celebrated in churches with dignified veneration through examples according to the traditions of the ancients; however in some, either willingly or by necessity, they are either changed or disregarded. And as we recall above how a bad fruit has often proceeded from the root of honourable models, some of the many deviations and disregards we know ought to be shown. For the holy Feast of Epiphany or the Octave, in order to strengthen the belief of the faithful and so that divine grace would be worshipped to a higher degree, and to attract the unbeliever by this manner of religious service, the old Fathers of the Church prescribed certain imaginative ceremonies such as the star guiding the Magi to the new-born Christ, the cruelty of Herod, the dispatch of the soldiers to kill the children, the lying-in of the Virgin, the angel warning the Magi not to return to Herod, and other additions for these days. But what now? What is carried out in some of our churches at times? Not the rule of religion, not the matter of divine veneration and cult, but the licentiousness of youthful impious dissolution is practised. The clerical habit is changed, a military order is introduced, no difference between a priest and a soldier, the house of God is thrown into disorder by a confusion of laymen and clerics, feasting, drinking, buffooneries, hostile jests, [seductive?] plays, the clang of weapons, the concourse of wenches, the undisciplined attack of all vanities.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ My expansion and revision of the (fragmentary) translation by Karl Pearson (1897), cited by Chambers, *The Mediaeval Stage*, vol. 2, p. 98, n. 2. The Latin text (Herrade de Landsberg, *Hortus Deliciarum*) is quoted from Young, *The Drama*, vol. 2, p. 413: 'Igitur de Nativitate Christi, de eius manifestatione et Magorum mysticis muneribus, de circumcissione, de eius in laude populi et palmis virentibus Hierosolimam itinere in asino et de duobus in Emaus discipulis quædam imitandi vestigia ecclesia præfixit per exempla quæ in quibusdam iuxta traditionem antiquorum digna veneratione celebrantur ecclesiis, in quibusdam aut pro voluntate aut pro necessitate vel mutata sunt vel neglecta. Et ut superiora repetamus quo sepe ex honorum exemplorum radice mali fructus prodierunt oportet ostendi de paucis excessum et neglectum cognoscamus in multis. De sancta die vel octava Epiphaniæ ab antiquis patribus religio quædam imaginaria de Magis stella duce Christum natum quærentibus, de Herodis sævitia et eius malitia fraudulenta, de militibus parvulorum obtruncationi deputatis, de lectulo Virginis et angelo Magos ne redirent præmonente et de ceteris dici illius appendiciis

Several details in this extract are not entirely clear. However, representations of soldiers and weapons in churches and what is perceived as confusions of military and religious ceremonial appear to have been issues at the time. If such missionary performances as the *ludus magnus* in Riga could be regarded as something against which Innocent reacted, it would indeed make sense in this context. Neither Innocent nor Herrad are against liturgical enactments as such, but against what they consider as abuses. Our problem is the difficulty of arriving at any certainty as to where the line was drawn, because in neither case do we know of specific plays or enactments which would have fallen under the judgment of these two, in many ways moderate, ecclesiastical leaders.

Would the *ludus* have been acceptable to Innocent and Herrad or would they have regarded it as scandalous? Henry's description appears to use the biblical representations – and thus the biblical narratives – as a means of justifying the harshness of the conversion wars. The pagans who fled would indeed seem to have understood the general message correctly, even were they not being threatened at that precise moment.

Henry's claim that 'therefore, the church grew hushed and peaceful in a short time'⁴¹ is rendered into German (by Albert Bauer) as 'So war denn die Kirche für eine kurze Zeit stille und ruhte im Frieden.'⁴² This sentence seems difficult to understand: the problem is the meaning of *ecclesia* here. If it is the church of Rome, even in Livonia, why then would the prudent bringing back of the pagans lead to the peace of the church? Could the point simply be that the play had succeeded in its aim and had scared the pagans into adopting a peaceful stance, if only for a short time? This seems to be the interpretation of Schneider and would indicate that the doctrinal purpose of the play primarily consisted in a typological threat, to the effect that, as Gideon and David had punished pagans, a similar fate would be theirs should they not convert.

One large-scale Latin sung play which, according to its rubrics, actually represented armies on 'stage' is that usually referred to as *Ludus de Antichristo*,

præfinita est per quam fides credentium augeretur gratia divina magis coleretur et in ipsa spiritali officio etiam incredulus ad culturam divinam excitaretur. Quid nunc? Quid nostris agitur in quibusdam ecclesiis temporibus? Non religionis formula non divinæ venerationis et cultus materia sed irreligiositatis dissolutionis exercetur iuvenilis lascivia. Mutatur habitus clericalis, incohatur ordo militaris, nulla in sacerdote vel milite differentia, domus Dei permixtione laicorum et clericorum confunditur, commessiones, ebrietates, scurrilitates, ioci inimici ludi placesibiles armorum strepitus, ganearum concursus omnium vanitatum indisciplinatus excursus.

⁴¹ 'Sic ergo ad modicum tempus siluit ecclesia in pace quiescendo', Brundage, p. 53.

⁴² *Heinrici Chronicon Livoniae/Heinrich von Lettland, Livländische Chronik*, ed. Leonid Arbusow and Albert Bauer, trans. Albert Bauer (Darmstadt, 1959), p. 45.

probably written and performed during the reign of the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa (r. 1152–90) in c. 1160. This was largely based on what is often referred to as the *Libellus de Antichristo*, a letter from Abbot Adso to Queen Gerberga dating from c. 950.⁴³ The *Ludus de Antichristo*, however, subtly supports the importance of the role of the emperor in the Christian world – together with the pope, who is conspicuously silent throughout the play. It portrays the pagans as civilized but erring, but also makes it clear that even the German king (the emperor who has laid down his imperial crown) succumbs to the figure of Antichrist, but not the church, and that it was divine intervention alone – as it seems – which saves all in the end.

In terms of what we know about the contents of the *ludus magnus* in Riga, there is little in common with the *Ludus de Antichristo*. However, the latter makes it quite apparent that battles were actually staged in Latin sung plays.

Conclusions

I would argue that only a few very tentative conclusions may be drawn. The *ludus magnus* may have been anything from a large-scale enactment of biblical wars and fighting, combined with an exhortation to remind pagans of the urgency of their conversion, to a more traditional Latin sung play text of a more or less liturgically informed kind, such as the *ordo prophetarum*, pointing to the coming of Christ and representing the battle for the souls of the heathen. Whatever the case, it seems that, for his description, Henry chose to justify the violent conversion of the pagans in the Baltic by using Old Testament models. King Herod, on the other hand, does not quite seem to fit into such a scheme. He may, however – in an inverted sense – represent the doctrine of the New Testament, and it could be suggested that the play may have contained some version of a ‘Slaughter of the Innocents’ play. These traditional representations of Matthew 2:16–8 are preserved in a number of different versions.⁴⁴ Herrad of Landsberg’s text makes it clear that sometimes such representations were enacted in ways which were perceived as transforming the church into a military camp. Although it is difficult to see how a representation of King Herod’s slaughter of the innocent children in Bethlehem could be seen as a threat to the pagans, it

⁴³ See *Der Antichrist: Der staufische Ludus de Antichristo*, ed., trans. and annotated by Gerhard Günther (Hamburg, 1970). Although the rubrics make it clear that the play was sung, no music has been preserved. Concerning Adso’s *Libellus* and the *Ludus de Antichristo*, see pp. 17 and 21, and the German translation of the *libellus*, pp. 288–93.

⁴⁴ Young, *The Drama*, vol. 2, pp. 102–24.

might, at least partially, have represented an aspect of New Testament preaching by which the play could be brought to an end on a conciliatory note.

Any discussion of the *ludus magnus* must inevitably end in speculation. Even so, the various contemporary plays, enactments or liturgical representations, which in some way or another appear to reveal at least some kind of analogy with aspects of the description of the *ludus magnus*, provide an overall context for the real intention of the Riga play. It is, of course, possible that this was a unique presentation. Many surviving plays are unique, the *Ludus de Antichristo* and the *Danielis ludus* being two very different cases in point. However, even unique plays or representations of this period often share common characteristics, as in the case of the two *ludi*. Here we have the use of liturgical materials in a religious, but not liturgically limited, narrative, possibly with political intentions.⁴⁵ Interestingly, it is possible to point to preserved plays, approximately contemporary with Henry's chronicle, which show analogies with different aspects of the *ludus prophetarum*, as described by Henry, which apparently connected religious wars and the prophets. In spite of its seeming uniqueness, the *ludus magnus* may therefore be assumed to have fitted into the broad context of religious enactments as performed around 1200. The *ludus magnus* of Riga may be suggested, therefore, to have been a 'dramatic' *ad hoc* creation, used both to warn and to frighten the pagans who, as Henry's chronicle makes clear, were so highly resistant to conversion.

⁴⁵ In the case of the *Danielis ludus*, for possible political perspectives, see Richard K. Emmerson, 'Divine Judgment and Local Ideology in the Beauvais *Ludus Danielis*', in *The Play of Daniel: Critical Essays*, ed. Dunbar H. Ogden (Kalamazoo, MI, 1996), pp. 33–61.

Chapter 10

Bigger and Better: Arms Race and Change in War Technology in the Baltic in the Early Thirteenth Century

Kurt Villads Jensen

Introduction

Throughout Christmas night in 1207, group after group of pagan Lithuanians secretly crossed the River Düna (Latv. Daugava, Est. Väina, Russ. Dvina), and on Christmas morning began to attack the villages in Treiden (Latv. Turaida) and massacre the local population.¹ The war was a kind of preventive war and also an act of revenge, after the Lithuanians had for two years been the target of Christian crusades and a great number of pagans had been killed by the Rigans and the Semgallians.

On this Christmas morning, John and Theodoric were celebrating mass in the church at Kuppesele (Latv. Ķizbele). The first mass had ended, and John had begun the second, when the congregation heard about the invading army and fled the church. Some hid in the forest, some tried to get back to their homes but were caught, and many were killed. When John began reading the Gospel, the Lithuanians, mounted on fast horses, raced back and forth around the church and plundered the priests' house for cattle and horses, and they put the priests' clothes, food and other things on their wagons. But they did not enter into the church, because 'God ... looked out for His own.'² Next, John began celebrating the Holy Mystery, the communion, and he consecrated the body and the blood of the Lord. And he commended himself as a sacrifice to the Lord – which probably means that he was now certain that he would become a martyr. While he ministered the host, his co-celebrants watched the

¹ HCL XI.5–6, pp. 51–4. Similarly, Henry reports that during a baptism in Vironia (Est. Virumaa, Ger. Wierland) in 1219, the sound of the approaching pagan army was heard, and '[w]e immediately put down the holy chrism and the other holy articles, therefore, and hurried to the ministry of shields and swords' (HCL XXIII.7, pp. 161–2; Brundage, p. 179).

² HCL XI.5, p. 51; Brundage, p. 71.

door but stood faithfully with him and encouraged him not to neglect the divine service for fear of the pagans.

By the grace of God, Henry's narrative continues, they finished the mass, removed everything from the altar and hid it and themselves in a corner of the church. Now one of the pagans entered the church, ran around and searched it all, but when he found the altar empty, he simply shouted 'bah' and left again. Another group of Lithuanians now came to the village, and one of them rode his horse into the church, but he also left without noticing the priests. Now a third group came and one of the pagans even drove his wagon through the church, still, however, without detecting John and Theodoric. The church was not a big or elaborate edifice, so it must have seemed a miracle that the two clerics were protected from their enemies. They gave proper thanks to God, at evening they fled to the forest and, after three days without food, they eventually reached Riga and safety again.

This is only one of the numerous descriptions in Henry's work where actual warfare and religious ritual are closely connected in a narrative form which combines several genres. It gives the impression of an eyewitness account by its precise details: the act of listening for enemies and their entry into the church on foot, on horseback, in wagons, and by such details as the disappointed pagan shouting 'bah'. But it also includes the commentary of an omniscient author almost in the fashion of a modern novelist, by commenting on the feelings of the persons involved, for example, in stating that John prepared himself to become a martyr – a sentiment that Henry could have guessed but of which he could not possibly have had any exact knowledge. And the narrative conveys the teaching of the theologian – that mass should not be interrupted because of fear of death and that, in the end, God protects his people. Henry of Livonia had an ability to describe events in an almost photographic manner, and much of his chronicle could be used directly as a film script. It is a carefully constructed text and great art. The intent of this chapter is to discuss three elements that formed the background for and became intimately woven into Henry's text and which are used by Henry in his work with different genres. The first is how warfare changed in the time preceding Henry's own. The second is how the actual use of physical violence was only one element in warfare, which also comprised the preparations for violence and the continuation, the securing of control also without the use of open violence. The third element is the spiritual and theological framing of warfare – how it was justified, but also how participants believed that they had to take part in it.

The Military Revolution around 1200

In the decades around 1200, the technique of warfare changed everywhere in Europe to an extent which is perhaps best described as an early military revolution with far-reaching consequences which were as important as the changes brought about by the much better known military revolution of the early sixteenth century.³ The changes around 1200 did not primarily consist in the introduction of new technology but rather in the refinement of existing war machines and especially in a marked growth in size. Everything became bigger, more solid, heavier and more expensive, be it ships, castles, throwing machines, horses or armour. On a general European level, this development was made possible not only by a general growth in economic resources during the twelfth century, but also by a new organization of the financing of warfare that continued into the first half of the thirteenth century. On one hand, increasing centralization of taxation and a more refined administrative system facilitated the replacement of personal semi-professional war-service with taxpaying and the central financing of a professional class of warriors.⁴ On the other hand, the twelfth century also saw an increased militarization of societies involving the development of new urban warrior classes – in Northern Europe as elsewhere – and with the refinement of general conscription ensuring that, in principle, the whole country would contribute to the king's wars.

On a more specific level, local rulers and warriors simply responded to developments among unfriendly neighbours and had to take part in the arms race or surrender. In some cases, invading soldiers brought with them new and unknown weapons that secured them a military advantage, but very often only for a short while until the local fighters, from bitter necessity, got to know the new weapons of destruction and learned how to defend themselves against them. In most cases, they simply adapted the new equipment themselves, as Henry described in numerous instances. In other cases, they tried to develop traditional armies or techniques that were perhaps better suited to local circumstances than

³ For a general introduction to the later military revolution, see Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500–1800*, 2nd edn (Cambridge, 1996); Jeremy Black, *A Military Revolution? Military Change and European Society 1550–1800* (Basingstoke, 1991). For discussion of a possible early military revolution in the Baltic around 1200, see also Kurt Villads Jensen, 'Blider og belejringsmaskiner i Norden omkring 1200', in *Krig fra først til sidst. Festskrift til Knud J.V. Jespersen*, ed. Lars Bisgaard et al. (Odense, 2006), pp. 59–73.

⁴ Traditional and good introductions to this change are Philippe Contamine, *La guerre au Moyen Âge* (Paris, 1980); James France, *Western Warfare in the Age of the Crusades, 1000–1300* (Ithaca, 1999).

those from outside – for example, continuing to use light cavalry in marshy areas where big war horses were less use. Henry of Livonia gives us a number of interesting examples of the meeting of older and newer military techniques during the military revolution around 1200.

The first example to be touched upon here concerns the change in ship types and in naval warfare around 1200. In 1210, Henry writes, the Curonians attacked the crusaders with eight ships in the narrow waters between Curonia and Ösel (Est. Saaremaa), and:

the crusaders⁵ left their Cogs, entered smaller boats, and hurried to the pagans. With insufficient caution, each boat went ahead of the others in haste to meet the foe first. Then the Kurs, by unloading the fore parts of their pirate ships, raised them up to meet those who were coming, arranged them two by two, and at the same time left a space between each of the pairs. For this reason the pilgrims who came on first in the two skiffs, or small boats, were trapped in the space between the pirate ships and, because they were in small boats, were not able to get at the enemy who stood high above them. When some of them had been killed by the enemies' lances, some drowned, and some wounded, the others returned to the larger ships and escaped.⁶

This is a very brief description but it clearly illustrates the change in naval military technology that was taking place exactly around 1200. Henry distinguished throughout his narrative between three main types of ships – the big war cog,⁷ the small boats (often called *cymbae*, translated by Brundage as *skiff*, in other places just as *boat*)⁸ and what he in many places calls the *pirate ships*.⁹ The cog

⁵ Here, as elsewhere, Brundage, in his translation of Henry of Livonia, follows the tradition widespread in Scandinavia of rendering *peregrini* as 'pilgrims'. As the text is obviously referring to crusaders at this point, I have amended this here.

⁶ HCL XIV.1, pp. 72–3; Brundage, pp. 94–5.

⁷ HCL X.9, p. 39 (two cogs); HCL XIV.1, pp. 72–3 (cogs); HCL XIV.5, p. 76 (two cogs); HCL XIX.2, pp. 123–4 (two cogs); HCL XIX.5, p. 127 (nine cogs); HCL XIX.11, p. 134 (one cog); HCL XXIV.7, p. 177 (four cogs).

⁸ *Cymba/skiff* is mentioned in HCL XIV.1, p. 73, and XIX.5, pp. 127 and 129.

⁹ Henry occasionally mentions other types, for example, *liburna* in HCL XIX.2, p. 123 and XIX.5, p. 129. On ships in Henry's chronicle, see Kristin Ilves, 'About the German Ships on the Baltic Sea at the Turn of the 12th and 13th Centuries: Data from the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia', *Offa. Berichte und Mitteilungen zur Urgeschichte, Frühgeschichte und Mittelalterarchäologie*, vol. 58, 2001 (Neumünster, 2003), pp. 81–6 (unfortunately I was not able to consult this article).

was a slow ship,¹⁰ it had to be moved by sail and could not be rowed, and when it came to fighting on the sea and entering enemy ships, the men normally had to leave the cog and go into smaller boats, as Henry described. But the advantage of the cog was that it could carry at least 150–200 men, depending on its size, and especially that it was impossible to board from any traditional long-ship. It functioned as a floating fort, was fortified and could be equipped with a tower. When the Estonians gathered an army against Riga in 1216, Henry tells us:

[t]he members of the bishop's household and the Brothers of the Militia who were in Riga heard of the Esthonians' design and bought a cog and strengthened it all about, like a fort. They put fifty men in it with ballistas and armor and they stationed it at the mouth of the Dvina River to guard the entrance of the harbor, lest the Oeselians come and block it up as before.¹¹

Henry seems to distinguish between ships in general and pirate ships. The latter designation is not explained in detail and is somewhat ambiguous. Henry only uses the word *pirate* to designate pagans, but his near-contemporary, the Danish historian Saxo (c. 1150–1220), actually also used it for Christian ships and crusader ships.¹² It is probable that Henry, by the term pirate ships, meant the traditional type of long boat which is well known from archaeological excavations. Around 1200, this was slowly being supplemented by the much bigger and much heavier cog, and the two ship types represented two very different ways of fighting. The traditional type was the long-ship developed in the Viking age and in use for centuries. This was much faster than the cog and easier to manoeuvre, it could be dragged over land or in security on the shore, and it could even be raised at sea by concentrating men and goods at the rear, as Henry described. But it could only transport about 30–40 men¹³ or, in the case of unusually big ones, up to 60.

¹⁰ For cogs, see Ole Crumlin-Pedersen, 'To Be or Not to Be a Cog: The Bremen Cog in Perspective', *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology* 29/2 (2007), 230–46; for warships in general, see Jan Bill, 'Castles at Sea: The Warship of the High Middle Ages', in *Maritime Warfare in Northern Europe: Technology, Organisation, Logistics and Administration 500 BC–1500 AD*, ed. Anne Nørgård Jørgensen et al. (Copenhagen, 2002), pp. 47–56.

¹¹ HCL XIX.11, p. 134; Brundage, pp. 184–5.

¹² Even about the hero of his narrative, the crusader Bishop Absalon; see Saxo Grammaticus, *Gesta Danorum. Danmarkshistorien*, 2 vols, ed. Karsten Friis-Jensen, Danish trans. Peter Zeeberg (Copenhagen, 2005), 14.21.3.

¹³ '... the Germans attacked them and mounted two of the Estonian pirate ships. They killed sixty men and brought the ships ... to the city of Wisby ...' In the same passage, Henry describes how one German crusader boards another pirate ship and kills 22 pagans, and the

When Henry describes the enemy navy, it is very often as consisting of ships and pirate ships in a way which indicates that the pirate ships were the strongest and most important militarily. During one battle in 1203, the eight pirate ships in the middle of the navy retreat slightly so as to trick the crusaders into following them and be open to attack from both sides from the other pagan ships – a well-known contemporary tactic on land where the fast light cavalry would retreat and draw the heavy cavalry of the enemy with them, leaving the infantry open to attack from both flanks. Henry's description makes most sense if we assume that the pirate ships were fast and easy to manoeuvre: 'When the Estonians heard this, on the other hand, withdrawing eight of their pirate ships a little from the others, they thought that they could surround the pilgrims as they came in between and so capture the ships prepared against them.'¹⁴ That these long-ships were very fast is also demonstrated by an incident that Henry relates in triumph – that an Estonian pirate ship had to give up the fight in a battle, tried to escape and rowed away so fast that it could not stop but ran with great violence into another ship, splitting it into two, and a great multitude of pagans luckily drowned.¹⁵

Throughout Henry's narrative, we also get glimpses of actual ship-to-ship fighting – how one strong crusader could enter a pagan ship and with his sword almost entirely clean the deck of enemies,¹⁶ or how the crusaders caught a pirate ship with iron hooks and dragged it closer, leading the pagans to choose to leave the ship and jump into the water and drown before they were killed by Christians.¹⁷ In one battle, the Estonians set fire to a float made of dry wood and animal fat and let it drift with the wind towards the crusaders. The flames reached higher than the mast on the ship, and a catastrophe was imminent. Bishop Albert (r. 1199–29), who was devotedly praying in his cabin, had to be called onto deck, and because of his prayer the wind suddenly shifted, gently blowing the burning float away from the Christians. This Henry presents as a miracle, but it did not prevent the Estonians from sending out two other burning floats followed by Estonian ships which the crusaders only with difficulty kept under control by sprinkling them with water, until the wind also took these away.¹⁸

Henry is describing naval warfare during a military revolution in which ships had been becoming bigger and bigger for a generation or more. From the middle

'eight men who survived' succeeded in sailing the ship away. HCL VII.2, p. 20; Brundage, pp. 42–3. It thus seems that 30 was the standard size of crew on the pagan pirate ships.

¹⁴ HCL VII.2, p. 20; Brundage, p. 42.

¹⁵ HCL XIX.5, p. 129.

¹⁶ HCL VII.2, p. 20.

¹⁷ HCL VIII.3, p. 24.

¹⁸ HCL XIX.5, p. 128.

of the twelfth century onwards – the dating is uncertain and the development only gradual – we find new and very big long-ships in Scandinavia, and in the last decades before 1200 the first big cogs emerge in northern Germany and in the Baltic Sea.¹⁹ This development in the north was part of a general European pattern in which ships became bigger and naval battles were fought in a different way than earlier. The cogs transported great numbers of soldiers and provisions over long distances, and the new ships were probably the necessary prerequisite for Danish and German expansion of the crusading engagement from the western Baltic to the eastern parts. With the old ships, it would have been very complicated to transport the necessary provisions as far away as Estonia and Finland.

When fortified with wooden towers and manned with crossbow archers, the cogs could effectively blockade entrances to harbours. During battles on the open sea, they formed the central base for smaller boats that transported soldiers from one ship to another in their attempt to board the enemies' ships. Along the great crusading routes of the Mediterranean, harbours were expanded with new piers and the basins dug deeper to receive the bigger ships, or cities were simply moved and new harbours established closer to open sea and deeper water. One of the reasons for Bishop Albert's transfer of the Episcopal see from Üxküll (Latv. Ikšķile) to Riga in 1201 was, Henry states directly, that there was a potential harbour for ships in Riga.²⁰ Albert did in the Baltic what Richard the Lionheart, king of England (r. 1189–99) did on Cyprus, and at almost exactly the same time – they both built the necessary harbours for the big crusading ships.²¹

The cogs were necessary for the crusades to Livonia and Estonia, but we should not imagine a simple difference in military technology so that crusaders came with new big ships, and the local pagans had to stick to the old fashioned boats, so dooming them to lose such battles. Whether one type of ship or the other was the most effective depended to a great extent upon local circumstances, upon weather and upon what kind of warfare the soldiers were used to. The cogs are mentioned by Henry only as crusader ships, and one can speculate why the pagans did not take over the idea and build cogs themselves or buy them

¹⁹ See also Anton Englert, 'Large Cargo Vessels in Danish Waters 1000–1250: Archaeological Evidence for Professional Merchant Seafaring before the Hanseatic Period', in *Boats, Ships and Shipyards: Proceedings of the Ninth International Symposium on Boat and Ship Archaeology, Venice 2000*, ed. Carlo Beltrame (Oxford, 2002), pp. 273–80.

²⁰ HCL V.1, p. 15.

²¹ See John H. Pryor, *Geography, Technology, and War: Studies in the Marine History of the Mediterranean, 649–1571* (New York, 1988); John H. Pryor, 'The Naval Architecture of Crusader Transport Ships and Horse Transports Revisited', *Mariner's Mirror* 76 (1990), 255–73.

from somewhere. Maybe the general embargo against trading weapons with the infidels actually worked here, but another reason could also be that the cogs were normally manned with a solid contingent of crossbow men, and the pagans had no experience with that weapon. Instead, they tended to use swords and spears and therefore gained more of an advantage from the faster long-ships with which they could get close to the enemies' ships.

Also, the crusaders operated a huge navy of ships and boats of different sizes and were not dependent upon cogs alone. On one occasion, they escaped a major Estonian attack because the Christians' cogs were light and not heavily loaded, so they could be dragged out through a shallow canal by the accompanying small boats – again the *cymbae*. These rowed down the canal and dumped the anchor, and the crew on the ship pulled it towards the anchor, and the soldiers in the skiffs then rowed the anchor a further bit down the canal, and so on.²²

The number of ships in the many sea battles described by Henry is very difficult to establish. Cogs were not numerous: Henry mentions between one and nine on any given occasion. When he counts pirate ships, he indicates between four and twelve of them.²³ Once, Henry writes about ten pirate ships and twelve other ships.²⁴ On another occasion, he enumerates the spoil as '... about three hundred pagan pirate ships as well as smaller boats and horses.'²⁵ The overall impression is that navies consisted of a great mixture of ships of different sizes, that they could easily comprise hundreds of ships at one time,²⁶ and that Henry was very interested in the big types of cogs and pirate ships, certainly reflecting their military importance.

Warfare on land similarly underwent great changes in the decades around 1200. This especially affected two aspects of it: siege warfare, in which there were new and bigger siege engines and correspondingly stronger castles; and armour, in which lightly equipped warriors on horseback gave way to heavily armoured professional knights on big and very strong warhorses.

The siege machines were of different kinds.²⁷ Sometime after 1100, new throwing machines were introduced and very fast became widespread all over

²² HCL XIX.5, p. 129.

²³ The figure of 200 pagan pirate ships mentioned by Henry in HCL XIX.5, p. 129 is therefore unconvincing.

²⁴ HCL VIII.3, p. 24.

²⁵ HCL XV.3, p. 91; Brundage, p. 113.

²⁶ According to contemporary annals, the Danish fleet against Estonia in 1219 consisted of 1,500 ships. Cf. Ribebågen and Rydårbogen, in *Danmarks middelalderlige annaler*, ed. Erik Kroman (Copenhagen, 1980), pp. 170, 232, 259.

²⁷ See Chapter 11 by Ain Mäesalu in this volume, with further references; Stephen R. Turnbull, 'Crossbows or Catapults? The Identification of Siege Weaponry and Techniques in

Europe. Since antiquity, European rulers had known the torsion machine described by the classical author Vegetius (from the early fifth century). This consisted of a large frame of beams with an arm attached to it that was propelled by an elastic band of twisted hide or hair. It was normally imprecise, with a short range, and could only propel relatively minor stones. The new machines, which may have been invented in China and come to Western Europe through Muslim intermediaries in the Middle East and Spain, consisted of a huge arm balanced on a frame of beams. The longest part of the arm was pulled down to the ground, and attached to it was a sling that contained the stone or other missiles. When the shorter part of the arm was pulled down with great speed, the long part of the arm swung high up in the air, and the sling, which was released automatically from a hook, would throw the missile in a high arc towards the enemies. The earliest of these machines were man-operated so that a number of soldiers pulled ropes attached to the short part of the arm at the same time – the traction trebuchet. These were relatively small and relatively easy to build or to transport from one place to another, and they were easy to move around during a siege, but they were not very precise. From the very late twelfth century, these machines were supplemented by contra-weight trebuchets, very big throwing machines with a contra-weight on the short arm, normally consisting of a big wooden box that was filled with stone or sand. Depending upon the size of the machine, the contra-weight could contain tons of stone. These big machines were very complicated to build and slow to operate, but they could throw much bigger missiles, stones weighing 100 kilograms or more, and they were much more precise than their hand-operated counterparts.

Henry's descriptions of these big throwing machines are covered in detail in Chapter 11 by Ain Mäesalu in this volume. He also shows how the machines were unknown to the Livs and Estonians when the crusaders came with them, but how the Öselians at first began to make their own copies of the machines and used them with great success against the Danes in 1222.²⁸ Mäesalu also describes from written and archaeological evidence how the machines were used both in sieges by the attackers and inside the fortifications by the defenders.

It is surprising how slowly the throwing machines were dispersed throughout the Baltic area. In 1135, they were unknown to one of the competing Danish kings, but introduced to his rival by Germans visiting the city of Roskilde who used them with great success.²⁹ The machines seem to have been unknown to the pagan Wends in the areas between Holstein and Mecklenburg in northern

the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia', in CCMBE, pp. 307–19.

²⁸ HCL XXVI.3, p. 188.

²⁹ Saxo Grammaticus, *Gesta Danorum*, 13.9.6.

Germany, the target of continuous Danish crusades since the 1120s. Only around 1180 did the Wends also begin to apply these machines against the crusaders in the defence of their cities, becoming able to bombard the approaching crusader ships with great precision. This indicates that they used the contra-weight trebuchet machines and not just the hand-propelled ones.³⁰ Henry of Livonia attests that the throwing machines were still unknown in the eastern Baltic in the first decade after 1200.

An important reason for the slow distribution of these siege engines is probably that the fortifications in the Baltic areas still consisted of wooden palisades on a mound or a natural hill in the landscape. These could be very solid constructions consisting of inner and outer walls made by interlocking timber of great dimensions, often in the shape of big boxes filled inside with earth. One traditional way of breaking down such a fortification would be to get near to the walls under some protection and then set the palisades on fire. Another would be to tear the timber-construction apart with iron hooks, as Henry described during the siege of Moon (Est. Muhu) in 1227: 'With a curved piece of iron, or iron hook, they now took hold of, and one by one they dragged down, the huge logs by which the walls were held up, so that some part of the fortification now fell to the ground.'³¹ This does not mean that throwing machines were not used against wooden fortresses, as is amply demonstrated in Henry's narrative. But the machines represented a siege technique that had been developed against castles built in stone, and they were unknown in the Baltic areas.

The Wendish areas in the western Baltic seem in the twelfth century to have been controlled by local rulers in wooden fortresses, but with the Danish-German crusading expansion from the 1120s, new and much bigger castles were built in stone. Sometimes older wooden forts were totally demolished after having been conquered by the crusaders; sometimes they were fortified and rebuilt in stone. And sometimes they continued in the traditional shape in wood to be used as local centres of power, if the local ruler did not have sufficient means to have them rebuilt in stone.³²

A similar pattern is recognizable in Livonia and Estonia from the narrative of Henry. The first stone castle in Livonia was Bishop Meinhard's new castle in

³⁰ Saxo Grammaticus, *Gesta Danorum*, 16.6.2; cf. 15.1.3; in general, Jensen, 'Blider og belejringsmaskiner'.

³¹ HCL XXX.4, pp. 217–18; Brundage, p. 241. See also the description of the siege of Fellin (Est. Viljandi) in 1210, in which the crusaders tried to burn the palisades and draw the timber out of the walls, HCL XIV.11, p. 84.

³² Horst W. Böhme, Busso von der Dollen and Dieter Kerber, *Burgen in Mitteleuropa*, 2 vols (Stuttgart, 1999), vol. 1, p. 111.

Üxküll, erected around 1185. This construction method was totally unknown to the local population and introduced by Meinhard:

[S]tonemasons were brought from Gothland the next summer. ... Part of the people were baptized before the beginning of the fort of Uexküll, and, after the fort was completed, all promised, though deceitfully, to be baptized. The walls, therefore, arose from their foundations. Because Meinhard paid for the building of a fifth part of the fort, this part was his property. Meinhard had first bought the land upon which the church at Uexküll stood. When the fort had at last been finished, those who had been baptized relapsed; those who had not yet been reborn refused to accept the faith. Meinhard, himself, nevertheless, did not desist from the enterprise. At that time the Semgalls, pagans of the neighborhood, hearing of the building made of stones, and not knowing that the stones were held together with cement, came with large ship's ropes, foolishly believing they could pull the fort into the Dvina. But they were wounded by the ballistarii instead and went away after having suffered losses.³³

The building of stone castles continued: by the crusaders, as when the Danish king built one on Ösel in 1222,³⁴ or by the Order of the Sword Brethren, who erected a series of small fortifications in stone along the great rivers in Livonia. The use of wooden fortresses also continued throughout the period covered by Henry's narrative and long after. It would therefore be wrong to claim that one type of castle building was immediately supplanted by a new one, but the interesting point in this connection is that the introduction of stone-built castles in Livonia may have gone hand in hand with the introduction of throwing machines, and that only these were thereafter used in sieges of wooden fortresses.

Henry mentions a number of other weapons and war machines that seem to have been introduced in Livonia by the crusaders, such as the crossbow and the siege tower which are also treated in the next chapter by Ain Mäesalu, and the hedgehog with iron spikes and the cover for the battle ram, which Henry calls a swine, but many of his contemporaries called a cat. Siege warfare consisted basically of three principles, common to all warfare in Europe at the time: To get above the enemy and get the advantage of shooting down upon him, from the moveable siege towers outside or from towers on the castles that were heightened to match the attackers' tower; to destroy or make an opening in the castle wall by burning it, by breaking it with stones from the throwing machines or by undermining it till it collapsed; and finally to set as much of

³³ HCL I.6, p. 3; Brundage, pp. 26–7.

³⁴ HCL XXVI.2, p. 187.

the enemy's equipment as possible on fire. Attackers threw burning liquids or glowing iron pieces into the castle, and the defenders tried with the same means to hit the siege towers or machines of the attacker. The defenders of Dorpat (Est. Tartu) used a burning wheel which they let roll down the castle hill towards the besiegers.³⁵ Like everywhere else, the response was to try to extinguish the fire as fast as possible. Henry does not mention attempts to impregnate the machines with fresh hides or vinegar,³⁶ but during the winter campaigns the soldiers used snow to put out the flames.

The main element in warfare was still single combat, with the traditional weapons of sword, spear and shield. Armies consisted of infantry and horsemen, and for the last group especially there seems to have been a clear difference between the crusaders and the pagans. Crusaders were clad in much more protective armour, and they rode much bigger and stronger horses.

Horse breeding is a complicated affair which has left few sources from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and only from subsequent centuries do we begin to get more solid information.³⁷ It is, however, possible to point to some very general tendencies. First of all, many of the crusaders to Livonia came from areas that were famous for their horses in the twelfth century, namely Denmark and Friesland. The Danish horse was known for its steady neck and soft skin, and for its high groins and golden complexion.³⁸ Second, a number of the ecclesiastical institutions which supported crusading began systematic horse breeding during the twelfth century: not only the knightly orders but also the Cistercians. In 1152, the Cistercian general chapter decreed that the houses of the order could not sell any of the foals raised by the order. In 1157, it became forbidden to sell any foal that had been broken in and trained with saddle, so that it could be used in war. Only working animals could be sold, and only until they had changed the first four teeth. A number of prohibitions were promulgated year after year, which clearly indicate that the Cistercians had already established a lucrative business providing warriors with fine horses. Eventually, in 1184, the general chapter gave up attempts to prohibit or delimit the Cistercian horse breeding and horse trade. It was now given total freedom, with only the small additional

³⁵ HCL XXVIII.5, p. 203.

³⁶ France, *Western Warfare*, p. 118.

³⁷ Sven Ekdahl, 'Horses and Crossbows: Two Important Warfare Advantages of the Teutonic Order in Prussia', in *The Military Orders*, vol. 2: *Welfare and Warfare*, ed. Helen Nicholson (Aldershot, 1998), pp. 119–51, is a very detailed analysis, but of the period after the time of Henry. Flemming Ettrup, 'Esrum Klosterstutterier', in *Fjernt fra menneskers færd. Sider af Esrum Klosters 850-årige historie*, ed. Jens Anker Jørgensen et al. (Copenhagen, 2000), pp. 76–101, points to the Cistercians' early involvement in horse breeding.

³⁸ Niels Skyum-Nielsen, *Kvinde og slave* (Copenhagen, 1971), p. 156.

remark: houses that got rich from such trade 'ought to' transfer some of the gain to less wealthy houses. We must imagine, then, that the many Cistercians in the crusading areas and also in Livonia helped to establish systematic local breeding of war horses, and that they also functioned as middle men, dealing with monasteries in more secure areas where horse breeding was well established, such as Esrum in Denmark.

The new war horse was big, because it had to carry a knight in full armour, and it increased in size in the decades around 1200, because the armour also became more solid and therefore heavier. The professional crusaders became better armoured and had bigger war horses, while ordinary crusaders and pagans had smaller horses and lighter armour. This general difference can also be observed in Henry's narrative. He mentions the German horses as a special type,³⁹ worthy of being used in 1208 as a gift for a king. The war horse with armour that Bishop Albert gave to Vladimir of Polotsk in 1206 must have been of a similar type.⁴⁰ The crusader horses were sometimes equipped with trappings that frightened the pagans,⁴¹ and in some instances the shining armour or helmets of the crusaders were enough to scare the pagans away – they were 'dazzled by the brightness of the German arms'.⁴² They were not only defeated psychologically, but many were wounded or killed, 'since the Esthonians were unarmed, for they are not accustomed to use armor as much as other nations do'.⁴³ The crusader horses were strong and could even carry two fully equipped men and still fight, but they were also fast and, together with the crusader's armour, it meant that one individual could hold a position even if severely outnumbered by pagans. This situation is described by Henry in a short passage about a battle at the River Livonian Aa (Est. Koiva, Latv. Gauja) in 1210: 'Rudolph of Jerichow fell to the ground, wounded by a lance, but Wigbold the Frisian lifted him to his horse. A Frisian himself, he trusted to the speed of his horse and, sometimes by fleeing, sometimes by returning to the enemy and by checking them in the narrow places, he freed many.'⁴⁴

In contrast to the crusader warhorses, Henry only identifies the pagans' horses as swift or speedy.⁴⁵ Again, we should be careful not to exaggerate the difference. Few crusaders had the means to buy a really solid and trained war horse and most must have relied on much smaller horses. On the other hand, the

³⁹ HCL XI.9, p. 57: *Equos meliores theutonicorum*, gift to Vladimir of Polotsk.

⁴⁰ HCL X.1, p. 33: *Dextrarius*.

⁴¹ HCL XV.3, p. 90: *equis phaleratis*.

⁴² HCL IX.3, pp. 27–8; Brundage, p. 49.

⁴³ HCL XV.3, p. 89; Brundage, p. 110.

⁴⁴ HCL XIV.8, p. 80; Brundage, p. 102.

⁴⁵ HCL XI.5, p. 51; XII.2, p. 60.

pagans brought back great troops of horses as booty from the crusaders. There was some exchange of experience concerning combat and also very practically exchange of race and genes, but not a simple acceptance by the pagans of a superior kind of warfare. The heavy horses were decisive in open battles on firm ground, but they had problems on softer, swampy ground where the light cavalry of the pagans was far superior. This is probably one of the reasons why the crusaders, and especially the Order of the Sword Brethren, changed after a few years from summer to winter campaigns.⁴⁶ The heavy horses were good on the frozen marches or lakes, much better than on the soft summer soil.

More examples of how violence was used in practice could be sifted out from Henry's chronicle, but the above examples have been selected to show that Henry was writing in a time of rapid change in two directions. It is possible to talk of a kind of early military revolution around 1200 in which machines, ships, castles and even horses became bigger and bigger, and it is also possible to talk about a rapid transfer of military equipment and of tactics and knowledge of siege warfare from the crusaders to the local populations in the areas Henry is writing about. At the same time, it is important to stress that the transfer was not one of necessary diffusion from a civilized and technologically advanced centre to a primitive periphery. Different military equipment served different functions in different terrains, and local traditions of warfare, developed for local circumstances, enabled pagan rulers to keep their positions for decades against the crusader armies.

When Henry described all these events and technological changes of his own time, he did it in an almost dry, modern crime-reporter style, which is exactly the reason that editors and commentators today have stressed that he saw it all with his own eyes. He probably did. But it is also important to stress that when Henry put his experience down on parchment, he deliberately chose a genre – the 'factual report of war' genre of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries which we know from a great number of other works of Henry's time – which must have found a public among experienced warriors – directly if they read it themselves, or indirectly if the content was retold to them by their house chaplains or learned relatives. This audience would have recognized every detail from personal experience and sympathized with the skilful warriors battling the evil enemies, and this may perhaps be exactly what Henry intended by choosing this specific genre. To many readers today, Henry's narrative seems cruel and almost perverse in its minute descriptions of killing, but to a medieval noble reader it would certainly have been very appealing – and thereby a means for Henry to attract even more crusaders to come to Livonia and fight the infidels.

⁴⁶ Friedrich Benninghoven, *Der Orden der Schwertbrüder. Fratres milicie Christi de Livonia* (Cologne, 1965).

War of Terror

The second element in reading Henry on war should be an attempt to understand war as something more comprehensive than physical violence alone. Here, Henry could also expect some resonance for his audience of experienced warriors. They knew from personal experience that war took time, was laborious and often depended upon detailed preparations, and that a victory in an open battle or the conquest of a fortress was only the beginning of a long process if you aimed to take control of an area. War was very physical and aimed directly at extinguishing the life of other individuals, but it also aimed at changing the enemy's way of thinking – through scaring them by sheer terror and promising them salvation – and at changing the surroundings that formed their thoughts. 'Certainly, through the many wars that followed, the pagans were to be converted and, through the doctrine of the Old and New Testaments, they were to be told how they might attain to the true Peacemaker and eternal life.'⁴⁷

War took time. Day after day was spent moving earth and timber, while enemies were filling the air with arrows, stones and shouting:

The Germans were digging day and night at the ramparts. They did not rest until they got near the top of the fort, until the rampart was cut in two, until it was expected that the whole fortification would tumble to the ground. The Livonians, seeing that the height of their strongest fort was being toppled, were bewildered in soul and confused in mind.⁴⁸

In 1220, the crusaders came to the castle of Holme (Latv. Mārtiņsala):

They seized the village which was thereabouts and took off spoils and besieged the fort, making war upon it for many days. Some of them built a tower, others put up the paterells,⁴⁹ others used the ballistas, others built hedgehogs and began to dig at the rampart from below. Still others carried up wood, filled the moat with it, and pushed the tower across it, while others began to dig beneath its shelter.⁵⁰

Henry describes how the army was divided into two, so that: 'Half of the army was assigned to dig night and day, so that some dug and others hauled away the loose dirt.'⁵¹ They would dig away the battlements to get the siege tower closer

⁴⁷ HCL X.13, p. 43; Brundage, p. 53.

⁴⁸ HCL XVI.4, p. 108; Brundage, p. 128.

⁴⁹ A type of throwing machine; see the discussion in Chapter 11 by Ain Mäesalu.

⁵⁰ HCL XXIII.8, p. 162; Brundage, pp. 180–81.

⁵¹ HCL XXVIII.5, p. 202; Brundage, p. 223.

to the wall, or construct ramparts for the trebuchets, or they would fill up the moats around the fortresses.

Warfare also included systematic and recurrent plundering raids into pagan territory, which served several purposes. The crusaders came back loaded with booty, cattle and slaves so often that it must have been a significant contribution to the economy in general, but also a deliberate strategy to weaken the enemy. And of course this worked both ways, so that the pagans also raided the Christians in a never-ending cycle of retribution. Plunder was also often a necessary part of the logistics of the single expeditions. Before laying siege to Dorpat, part of the crusading army was sent to Vironia (Est. Virumaa, Ger. Wierland) for three days and 'came back with sheep, cattle, and the rest of the things that are necessary for the army.'⁵²

Of lesser economic value, but probably good for the morale of the fighters, were the many heads that were cut off and brought back home. Headhunting seems to have been common everywhere in Europe, and Henry describes the Semgallians loading a whole wagon with the heads of Lithuanians and bringing it back to Semgallia. And when the Sword Brethren, against all odds, won a victory over the Livs at Holme and killed their leader Ako, his head was sent to Bishop Albert, arriving when he had just finished celebrating mass. When the head was presented to him, he 'rejoiced with all who had remained at home and gave thanks to God, Who, through a few, wrought the salvation of His church.'⁵³

The main terror element in warfare, however, seems to have been the incessant killing of people and the burning of all valuables that could not be moved away. 'We burned and devastated everything, killed all the males, captured the women and children, and drove off their horses and many flocks.'⁵⁴ The number of accounts similar to this in Henry's chronicle is remarkable, as well as being frightening to a modern reader, one would think, and the repeated burnings must have had more functions in his narrative than are apparent today. To many medieval readers it may probably have been an appealing scenario, that they were promised some action if they joined the crusaders, but the constant burning may also have conveyed some notion of purification of the land – almost a purgatory on earth.

War was also fought with audiovisual means. During the siege of the castle of Beverin, a priest entered the ramparts, and while others were fighting, sang to the honour of God and played his musical instrument. The pagans stopped and

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ HCL X.8, p. 38; Brundage, p. 60.

⁵⁴ HCL XX.2, p. 135; Brundage, p. 156.

stood still, for they had never heard anything similar in their country.⁵⁵ Henry does not specify whether they understood this positively or not. Also, while attacking an enemy army, the crusaders were supported by drums, singing and music on other instruments. In another episode, Henry relates that '[a]fter all the men were killed there was great rejoicing among the Christians and they played upon the drums, pipes, and musical instruments because they had taken vengeance upon the malefactors and had killed all the traitors'.⁵⁶ In a number of instances, Henry tells how the crusaders proceeded by singing aloud.

Sound and music, and the sound of the war bell,⁵⁷ is mentioned so frequently by Henry that it must have played an important part in this warfare. It had a psychological effect in comforting the crusaders and stressing that they belonged to a shared community. But it also had a spiritual significance. The new sound took over and conquered pagan space. Just as the earth was cultivated and forests turned into fields, so the air was filled with heavenly Christian music.

War was followed by baptism, preaching and the building of churches. It is described in detail by Henry, for example, after the conquests in Livonia in 1206:

The provost of Riga, therefore, in the name of the archbishop, after accepting boys of the better people of all Livonia as hostages, sent out priests to preach. The first of these was Alabrand, who set out for Treiden, preaching the Word of God and administering the sacrament of baptism. After laying out parishes, he built a church in Cubbesele. The priest Alexander was sent to Metsepole. After having baptized all the province, he began to live there, to sow the seed of the gospel, and to build a church. The priest Daniel, who had been, in a way, tested during the siege of the fort of Holm, was sent to the people of Lennewarden. ... After converting and baptizing them, Daniel the priest went back to Riga, committing to the Lord the now planted vineyard and sown field.⁵⁸

Baptism was the first and most important thing in new areas, and the building of churches came later – and sometimes had to be left to others to do because the first missionaries had hastened onwards to other villages. Henry described the great baptism tour in Estonia in 1221 and complained: 'The Danes afterwards built a church there, as they did in many other villages baptized by us'.⁵⁹ This

⁵⁵ HCL XII.6, p. 63. For the use of music in Baltic warfare, see Alan V. Murray, 'Music and Cultural Conflict in the Christianization of Livonia, 1190–1290', in CCMBF, pp. 293–305.

⁵⁶ HCL XXVIII.6, p. 205; Brundage, p. 226.

⁵⁷ HCL XIV.5, p. 76; XVIII.6, p. 120.

⁵⁸ HCL X.14–15, pp. 44–6; Brundage, pp. 66–7.

⁵⁹ HCL XXIV.5, p. 174; Brundage, p. 193.

whole process is succinctly summarized by Henry: 'quite properly theological doctrine followed the wars'.⁶⁰

The new church building must have had a very strong symbolic effect, marking out the Christian presence in the pagan landscape, and it was recognized by the enemies as such. A standard procedure for the pagans during a raid on Christian territory was to burn down the new churches⁶¹ and desecrate – or re-consecrate – Christian areas with pagan rituals: '... they burned the empty villages and churches and, with their pagan sacrifices, committed many abominations around the churches and tombs of Christians'.⁶² Similarly, the Christians cut down the pagan idols, for example, in Vironia where the pagans could not understand why their gods did not begin bleeding.⁶³ Henry relates, however, many more instances of pagan desecration than of Christian. This was probably not because he thought it was negative in any way to burn idols: quite the contrary. The difference was more probably the fact that pagan cults were located in nature away from where people lived, and that they did not have any central cultic building that the Christians could locate and burn down. In that sense the Christianization of the landscape also led to a centralization of the cult and probably even to the introduction of a more hierarchical social ordering of society, in which an elite of educated men alone could perform the sacred rituals.⁶⁴

The many descriptions in Henry's chronicle of the straightforward physical labour connected to siege warfare is often taken as proof that he participated in the battles himself, and there is no reason to doubt that he did. There must, however, be a more profound reason underlying them. Henry was a careful and cautious author who could choose the genre in which he wanted to express himself. War was the topic of a great part of medieval literature. It could be treated in heroic tales such as some of the many bestsellers of Henry's time, for example, as *Parzival*, the Grail stories or the many versions of the *Song of Roland*, in which mundane matters such as digging in earth are not mentioned at all. These were stories about heroes which aimed to entertain an aristocratic audience. But Henry wanted to demonstrate that warfare extended far beyond

⁶⁰ HCL X.13, p. 43; Brundage, p. 65.

⁶¹ HCL VII.1, p. 19; XIV.10, p. 83; XIV.11–12, pp. 85–6; XXIX.1, p. 207; XXX.1, p. 216, and many more places where Henry just talks in a non-specific way about the burning of villages.

⁶² HCL XIV.10, p. 83; Brundage, p. 104.

⁶³ HCL XXIV.5, p. 175.

⁶⁴ An interesting discussion of these effects of Christianization is found in Przemysław Urbańczyk, 'The Politics of Conversion in North Central Europe', in *The Cross Goes North: Processes of Conversion in Northern Europe, AD 300–1300*, ed. Martin Carver (Woodbridge, 2003), pp. 15–27.

physical killing. It also included practicalities such as moving earth, plunder and the psychological battle, such as exhibiting the enemy's heads on spears or fighting for control over sound in the landscape; or simply burning it all down. Somehow, Henry's narrative has too much war to be really a war report – it does not only romanticize battles and heroes, but also shows, with many details, how laborious, sometimes tedious and always insecure these wars lasting generations actually were. It stresses the fact that wars were not won by battles alone, but by the continuous efforts of the crusaders.

War for God

The third element in an analysis of Henry on war concerns the theological and spiritual framing of warfare. The war was God's war, *praelia domini*, so it was a sacred war in exactly the sense that Guibert of Nogent (c. 1053–c. 1124) and other chroniclers used to describe the First Crusade (1096–99).⁶⁵ The crusaders in the Baltic fought for God against the infidels who attacked the true church of God. And even more, they fought against pagans who had adopted the Christian faith but afterwards left it again. The motive of apostasy is important to Henry because it legitimized the unlimited use of force, without being against the canonical teaching of the church which rigorously maintained that pagans could not be forced to become Christians.

God's presence in this war is expressed on every page of Henry's narrative, simply by the references he constantly makes – by his choice of words and phrases – to the wars of the Old Testament and to the passages in the New Testament that were common places in the legitimization of crusades. God's intervention is also, again and again, explained by Henry and linked directly to physical warfare. If crusaders were killed or lost in battle, this was the trial of affliction by which God tries the just. If they were not successful in their attacks or in sieges, this was because the right time had not yet come – but it would in the end. If they fell in battle or met a cruel death at the hands of the infidels, Henry expressed the pious hope that they would be rewarded with the crown of martyrdom. And when the crusaders killed their enemies and were victorious, it was because God so willed, or with God's help, and it is pleasing to God.

The role of the Holy Virgin Mary has often been stressed in studies of Henry, but still it is difficult to overestimate her importance, for Henry and for crusading in general. The crusaders in Livonia proceeded under the banner of

⁶⁵ The most recent full treatment of the holy and penitential aspect of crusades is William J. Purkis, *Crusading Spirituality in the Holy Land and Iberia* (Woodbridge, 2008).

Mary. When they captured a fortress, Henry records that they 'went up to them in the fort, instructed them in the beginnings of the faith, sprinkled the fort with holy water, and raised the banner of Blessed Mary over it'.⁶⁶

In the liturgy to the assumption of Mary, on 15 August, the celebrant quotes the Song of Songs: 'You are beautiful and delicate, daughter of Jerusalem, and terrible, like an army from the castles, ready for war.' And later, the choir responds: 'Who is she, rising like the morning sun, beautiful like the moon, exquisite like the sun, terrible like an army from the castles, ready for war.' The liturgy illustrates perfectly how Mary was beautiful – and terrible. She was the caring mother for her Son and all who believe in Him, but terrible to all who rebel against Him. 'Fear this gentle Mother of Mercy. Adore this Mother of God and give satisfaction to Her, Who takes such cruel revenge upon Her enemies.'⁶⁷ The crusaders in Livonia, of course, knew the Mary liturgy, and it is no coincidence that the battle at Fellin (Est. Viljandi) took place on 15 August; and that the next year the crusaders decided to attack Dorpat on the same day, because it had worked so well in Fellin.⁶⁸

What motivated the individual crusader? According to Henry, they sought indulgence. This is not an explanation that we should dismiss easily. It is evident from Henry's description that life in the religious border area was hard, dangerous and insecure, and that warfare and sudden death were normal parts of daily life. The fighting Christians were, of course, also driven by economic greed, honour, social pressure from peers and probably also family tradition, as well as other things. But they would not have gone on a crusade if they had not been prepared to die; and if they had not believed that they would have gained something better from dying than from staying peacefully alive at home. They believed this because they were convinced that they fought in God's war, with the help of Mary, against evil. The theological discourse that Henry also applied in his narrative was one of the sources for this conviction concerning the crusaders – no matter whether they could read it themselves or whether the message was conveyed to them through crusade preachers.

We should read Henry's descriptions of war on different analytical levels, distinguishing between the direct uses of violence, the many practical and psychological elements accompanying violence, and the ideological and theological understanding of warfare. Only then can we combine the elements again in a coherent narrative about warfare. This is not easy, but can be done, and the best example of it is actually Henry's own chronicle.

⁶⁶ HCL XI.6, p. 54; Brundage, p. 74. This banner is often mentioned by Henry.

⁶⁷ HCL XXV.2, p. 181; Brundage, p. 199.

⁶⁸ HCL XXVII.2, p. 195; HCL XXVIII.5, p. 202.

Chapter 11

Mechanical Artillery and Warfare in the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia

Ain Mäesalu

Introduction

In addition to all its other virtues, the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia offers brilliant opportunities for studying the weapons – and warfare in general – of the early thirteenth century.¹ Despite being a priest, Henry was keenly interested in all military matters. Moreover, he was prepared to do battle himself when the occasion called for it. In 1219, for instance, he even cut short a baptism ceremony that he was conducting in Vironia (Ger. Wierland, Est. Virumaa) because a large Estonian force was approaching: ‘We immediately put down the holy chrisam and the other holy articles, therefore, and hurried to the ministry of shields and swords. We hastened onto the field, putting our battle lines in order.’²

More often, however, the chronicler remained an observer – but a very attentive one capable of meticulously recording various aspects of the military events he had witnessed. When reading the chronicle, one must recognize Henry’s expert knowledge of contemporary weapons and military technology, the strategy and tactics of field battles, and especially of the siege and defence of hillforts. Yet the valuable information on weaponry and warfare provided by the chronicle has so far been only analysed and researched rather superficially. Of all the articles discussing specific weapon classes, only a few make any extensive use of the information yielded by Henry’s chronicle, in addition to other sources.³

¹ This research was supported by the European Union through the European Regional Development Fund (Centre of Excellence in Cultural Theory) and Estonian Science Foundation research grant no. 7880.

² HCL XXIII.7, pp. 161–2; Brundage, p. 179.

³ Sven Ekdahl, ‘The Siege Machines during the Baltic Crusades’, in *Les envahisseurs des temps médiévaux et leurs armes*, ed. Tadeusz Poklewski-Koziell (Fasciculi Archaeologiae Historicae 20) (Łódź, 2007), pp. 29–51; Ain Mäesalu, ‘Heitemasinad muistse vabadusvõitluses’, in *Muinasaja loojangust omariikluse läveni. Pühendusteos Sulev Vähre 75. sünnipäevaks*, ed. Andres Andresen (Tartu, 2001), pp. 69–105; Ain Mäesalu, ‘Die Rolle

The weapons that fascinate Henry most are crossbows and stone-throwing machines. He mentions these far more frequently in the chronicle than other kinds of arms, such as bows, swords, spears and battle-axes. By way of comparison, it is interesting to note that in the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* (c. 1290s), the same ranged weapons receive considerably less frequent attention. This could be because the author of the *Rhymed Chronicle* was himself a member of the Teutonic Order, and therefore emphasized the role of the knights of the Order and their melee weapons in his battle accounts. Henry was a priest, and naturally he was obliged to praise the knights of the Order and the crusaders. Yet whenever crossbowmen and operators of siege engines played an important role in some battle situation, Henry reported this in his chronicle regardless of the lower social status of these men. Henry's reports can therefore be considered reliable and should not be accused of overestimating the importance of these weapons.

Analysing Henry's information on crossbows and stone-throwing machines and comparing it to the data gleaned from archaeological excavations affords a novel insight into the strategy and tactics of the use of these weapons in military operations conducted in the territory of modern Estonia and Latvia. Overall, it can be said that these weapons played a far more significant role in the battles of the Baltic crusades than has previously been thought. One reason for this was certainly the fact that the local peoples were unfamiliar with crossbows and siege engines at that time.

Bows were used, but relatively rarely. The only local population that the chronicle describes as shooting arrows – and on a single occasion at that – from simple bows are the inhabitants from Ösel (Est. Saaremaa), or Öselians.⁴ Archaeological excavations, too, have yielded very few arrowheads belonging to the local peoples datable to that period.⁵ The principal ranged weapon used by the Estonians and other Baltic peoples was the javelin, a weapon quite often

der Armbrust während der Kreuzzüge im Baltikum im 13. Jahrhundert', in *Kryžiaus karų epocha Baltijos regiono tautų istorinėje sąmonėje. Mokslinių straipsnių rinkinys*, ed. Rita Regina Trimonienė and Robertas Jurgaitis (Šiauliai, 2007), pp. 170–80; Andris Zeļenkovs, 'Dažas piezīmes par metamo ierīču pielietojanu Livonijā 13.–14. gadsimtā', in *Latvijas Kara muzeja gadagrāmata*, II (Riga, 2001), pp. 8–32; Stephen Turnbull, 'Crossbows or Catapults? The Identification of Siege Weaponry and Techniques in the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia', in CCMBF, pp. 307–19. See also Chapter 10 by Kurt Villads Jensen in this volume.

⁴ HCL XIX.5, p. 129.

⁵ Vytautas Kazakevičius, *Geležies amžiaus strėlės Lietuvoje (II–XII/XIII amžius)* (Vilnius, 2004); Ain Mäesalu, 'Otepää linnuse nooleotsad ajalooliste seoste ja sündmuste kajastajana', in *Eesti ajaloo küsimusi, XI: Allikaõpetuslikke uurimusi* (Tartu, 1989), pp. 27–46.

mentioned in Henry's chronicle.⁶ And archaeological excavations of the Baltic heritage sites have yielded numerous iron javelin heads, too.

Crossbows and Crossbowmen

Crossbows receive a great deal of attention and are mentioned more frequently in Henry's chronicle than other weapons. The word 'crossbow' (*balista* in the Latin text) occurs 17 times⁷ and 'crossbowmen' (*balistarii*) 32 times in the text.⁸ The word *sagitta* is used by Henry to denote both crossbow bolts and bow arrows, but on at least 13 occasions he undoubtedly uses it to mean crossbow bolts.⁹ In the last chapter of the chronicle, the terms *iaculum* and *telum* are used for crossbow bolts.¹⁰

Those historians who have studied the composition of crusaders' armies in the Baltic campaigns have so far paid relatively little attention to crossbowmen. Usually they have been regarded as the knights' squires.¹¹ Henry, however, holds the crossbowmen in much higher esteem in his chronicle. He often makes special reference to their contribution in some episode of the war, even naming them side by side with the knights and the Sword Brethren.¹² In 1208, for instance, the Semgallians were preparing to launch a raid on the Lithuanians and asked Riga for assistance. Henry described that assistance as follows: 'There were sent with Viesthard, therefore, fifty or a few more men, knights and ballistarii, and also several brothers of the Militia of Christ.'¹³ Such reports suggest that

⁶ HCL XIV.8, p. 78; XV.3, p. 90; XXIII.9, p. 165.

⁷ HCL VII.4, p. 21; XI.9, p. 57; XIV.5, p. 76; XIV.10, p. 83; XVIII.7, p. 121; XIX.11, p. 134; XX.7, p. 139; XXII.5, pp. 151–2 (twice); XXIII.8, p. 162; XXV.5, p. 185; XXVI.8, p. 191; XXVII.2, p. 195 (twice); XXVII.3 p. 196; XXVIII.3, p. 201; XXX.5, p. 218.

⁸ HCL I.6, p. 3; X.8, p. 38; X.9, p. 39 (twice); X.12, pp. 41–2 (3 times); XI.8, p. 56; XII.2, p. 59; XII.6, p. 65; XIII.1, p. 66; XIV.5, pp. 75–6 (4 times); XIV.8, p. 78; XIV.11, p. 84; XV.3, pp. 90–91 (4 times); XVI.4, p. 108; XIX.5, p. 130; XIX.8, p. 133 (twice); XIX.11, p. 134; XXVI.3, p. 188; XXVII.2, p. 195; XXVII.3, p. 197; XXVII.6, p. 198; XXVIII.5, p. 203; XXX.4, p. 218.

⁹ HCL VII.4, p. 21; VIII.1, p. 24; X.12, p. 42; XI.6, p. 54; XIV.11, p. 84; XVI.4, p. 108 (twice); XIX.8, p. 133; XXIII.4, p. 157; XXIII.8, pp. 163–4 (twice); XXVIII.5, p. 203 (twice).

¹⁰ HCL XXX.4–5, pp. 218, 220.

¹¹ Friedrich Benninghoven, *Der Orden der Schwertbrüder. Fratres milicie Christi de Livonia* (Cologne, 1965), pp. 402–4.

¹² HCL XII.2, p. 59; XII.6, p. 65; XIII.1, p. 66.

¹³ HCL XII.2, p. 59; Brundage, p. 80.

crossbowmen as a specialized force may even have formed separate units within the crusaders' army.

The professional skills of the crusaders' crossbowmen are demonstrated by the fact that they could act as snipers, picking out the most important figures in the enemy's ranks. Henry found the marksmanship of the crossbowmen most remarkable and wrote with great enthusiasm about their more successful hits. For instance, in 1212, when the crusaders were laying siege to the Sattesele (Latv. Līvu kalns) stronghold, the elder of the Soteclē Lettgallians, Russin, took off his helmet in greeting while standing in a tower of the stronghold and was instantly hit in the head by a crossbowman's bolt.¹⁴ During the 1219 siege of the Mesoten (Latv. Mežotne) fort, the nephew of Vesthard, elder of the Semgallians, was slain with a crossbow bolt.¹⁵ In 1218, Russian forces were besieging the stronghold of Wenden (Est. Võnnu, Latv. Cēsis), and the archers in the ranks of the defending crusaders 'with their ballistas killed many Russians and wounded a great many of them. Many of the gravely wounded nobles were carried off, half alive, on litters slung between two horses.'¹⁶

Henry's chronicle suggests that crossbowmen engaged only in fixed-position fighting – mostly in the defence and siege of fortified places. Interestingly the chronicler does not mention crossbowmen in a single description of field battles.

Crossbows as Defensive Weapons

Most frequently, Henry mentions crossbows and crossbowmen in connection with the defence of the crusaders' fortified positions; in addition to the forts and Riga, they are on a couple of occasions also said to have acted successfully on board ship.

The important role of crossbows in stronghold defence is demonstrated by the fact that they are the only weapon that Henry explicitly mentions as part of the defensive armament installed in the forts in 1221, when the crusaders began to fortify their strongholds in Estonia.¹⁷ A number of these missile weapons later fell into the hands of Estonians – a fact Henry cannot forget, recalling three times in his subsequent narrative the crossbows that had at one time belonged to the Sword Brethren, while they still occupied the hillforts.¹⁸

¹⁴ HCL XVI.4, p. 108.

¹⁵ HCL XXIII.4, p. 157.

¹⁶ HCL XXII.5, p. 151; Brundage, p. 170.

¹⁷ HCL XXV.5, p. 185; XXVI.8, p. 191; XXVII.2, p. 195; XXVIII.3, p. 201.

¹⁸ HCL XXVI.8, p. 191; XXVII.2, p. 195; XXVIII.3, p. 201.

Henry's chronicle shows that crossbowmen could often make up quite a substantial part of a fort's garrison.¹⁹ On 13 occasions, Henry in a few – or, in a couple of cases, more – sentences describes the defence of hillforts belonging to the crusaders. On all these occasions he remarks approvingly on the crossbowmen among the defenders. As a rule, they acted with great efficiency and sometimes even decided the outcome of the siege. On at least eight occasions Henry even attributes the lifting of the siege by the local peoples primarily to the fact that their ranks had been depleted by crossbow fire, or at least notes their fear of the crossbow bolts.²⁰ In 1223, for example, a host of 20,000 Russians, together with Estonians, maintained their siege of the fort hill of Reval (Est. Tallinn), held by the Danes, for as long as four weeks, but were unable to capture it because, as the chronicler points out, the defenders' numerous crossbowmen slayed many besiegers.²¹

Yet Henry's chronicle does include one instance where the crusaders had to surrender and hand over the fort, despite the efficient fighting of their crossbowmen. These were the Danes holding the fort founded by King Waldemar II (r. 1201–41) in Ösel, in 1222. The Öselians soon came to sack it, building for that purpose 17 stone-throwing machines with which they relentlessly bombarded the fort. Henry noted: 'But many of the Oeselians fell, wounded by the ballistarii. The Oeselians did not, however, cease attacking the fort for that reason.'²² Finally, after a five-day siege, the Danes were forced to accept the offer to surrender made by the Öselians and abandon their fort.

The first local people to adopt the crossbow as part of their armament were the Estonians, who had acquired a number of those weapons in 1222–23, upon the reconquest of their hillforts that had for a while been in the hands of the Sword Brethren. Estonians valued their crossbows very highly: according to Henry, it was crossbows rather than any other weapon that they gave to the leaders of the Russian forces they had called to their assistance.²³ It is also interesting that in his entries for the following years, 1223–27, Henry describes the Estonians, too, using these ranged weapons precisely for the defence of their hillforts.²⁴

The crusaders' crossbowmen wielded their weapons with equal success on board ship, too. On board cogs they could even account for the majority of the defence crew. In 1215, Estonians blockaded nine cogs of the crusaders that

¹⁹ HCL VII.4, p. 21; XI.8, p. 56; XII.6, p. 65; XIII.1, p. 66; XV.3, p. 89.

²⁰ HCL I.6, p. 3; VII.4, p. 21; VIII.1, p. 21; X.12, p. 42; XIV.5, pp. 75–6; XXII.5, p. 151–2; XXIII.4, p. 157; XXVII.3, p. 197; XXX.5, p. 220.

²¹ HCL XXVII.3, p. 197.

²² HCL XXVI.3, p. 188; Brundage, p. 207.

²³ HCL XXVII.3, p. 196.

²⁴ HCL XXVII.2, p. 195; XXVIII.5, p. 203; XXX.4, p. 218.

had sought shelter from storm in New Port, Ösel, for two weeks, but could not capture them. According to Henry, most of the Estonians who perished there were killed by crossbow bolts.²⁵ When the Estonians were planning to attack Riga in 1216, the crusaders purchased a cog and, manning it mainly with crossbowmen, positioned it in the mouth of the River Düna (Latv. Daugava, Est. Väina, Russ. Dvina) to guard against the Öselian fleet.²⁶ In 1211 at the Treiden (Latv. Turaida) fort, the crusaders' crossbowmen kept shooting so intensively from both banks of the River Livonian Aa (Latv. Gauja, Est. Koiva), and probably also from a bridge built across the river, that the Estonian fleet indeed proved unable to break through.²⁷

Crossbows as Siege Weapons

Almost as often as in the defence of forts, Henry underscores the importance of crossbows in siege operations; on a few occasions he even describes them as a type of siege weaponry.²⁸

On 16 occasions, Henry dedicates at least a couple of sentences, if not a longer paragraph, to the sieges of local peoples' forts undertaken by the crusaders. On four of these occasions, the fort was finally taken with a cunning and unexpected attack.²⁹ One of these instances, the 1215 conquest of the Leole (Est. Lõhaver) fort, is described by Henry as follows: 'Everyone blessed the Lord, Who had miraculously delivered the fort into their hands without the use of ballistas or machines.'³⁰

In the remaining eleven accounts Henry always refers to the active role of crossbowmen, often even deeming it decisive.³¹ On nine occasions he mentions siege towers, frequently associating the activity of the crossbowmen directly with them.³² According to the common view, a siege tower's function is to get rolled up to the walls of the fort so that a gangplank can be dropped onto the ramparts,

²⁵ HCL XIX.5, p. 130.

²⁶ HCL XIX.11, p. 134.

²⁷ HCL XV.3, p. 91.

²⁸ HCL XIV.10, p. 83; XVIII.7, p. 121.

²⁹ HCL XI.8, p. 56; XIII.4, p. 70; XIV.6, p. 78; XVIII.4, p. 117.

³⁰ HCL XVIII.7, p. 121; Brundage, p. 140.

³¹ HCL X.9, p. 39; XIV.11, p. 84; XIX.8, p. 133; XXVII.6, p. 198; XXX.5, p. 220.

³² HCL XIV.11, p. 84; XVI.4, p. 108; XIX.8, p. 133; XXIII.8, p. 162; XXVII.2, p. 195; XXVII.6, p. 198; XXVIII.5, p. 203; XXX.4, p. 218; XXX.5, p. 220.

allowing the besiegers to rush across and enter the fort or castle.³³ Henry's chronicle, however, says nothing about gangplanks being dropped from the tower and used for entering the forts. In fact, this would not have been possible in the Baltic region, since the local hillforts, with their timber and earthwork fortifications, were located on top of hills which sloped down gently, with a very small gradient.³⁴ Even when pushed right up to the foot of the hill, the siege tower would still have stood at a distance of some 25–30 metres from the walls. Considering that the common height of siege towers was no more than 20–25 metres, it is indeed difficult to imagine how it could have been possible, from a technical point of view, to *drop* a 25–30-metre gangplank from the top of the tower so as to help the attackers enter the fort.

Henry repeatedly describes the siege towers being pushed as close to the fort as possible, allowing the crossbowmen, but sometimes also archers and javelin throwers, to climb up and release a hail of missiles onto the defenders of a certain sector. Covered by that missile onslaught, other besiegers in the same sector began to dig at the foot of the hill to undermine the base of the fortifications. At many forts, this sapping was successful enough to bring the fortifications down and force the defenders to surrender.³⁵

The most extensive sapping operation described by Henry was undertaken during the siege of Dorpat (Est. Tartu) fort, in the summer of 1224. The slope of the hill was gradually dug away there, so that it became possible to push the siege tower closer and closer to the fort. Regardless of that, however, it must have remained quite far from the fortifications, since we are told that when the defenders of the Dorpat fort attempted to set fire to the siege tower, they did not throw burning brands at the tower but 'they opened a big hole in the fortifications and from this they put out wheels filled with fire and directed them toward the tower'.³⁶ The Dorpat fort was eventually taken by storm, and most of the invaders went in through the above-mentioned 'big hole'.

Thus, the descriptions in Henry's chronicle indicate that the crusaders' crossbowmen were only employed in fixed-position warfare and never took

³³ Volker Schmidtchen, *Mittelalterliche Kriegsmaschinen* (Soest, 1983), pp. 102–4; Kostantin Nossov, *Осадная техника Античности и Средневековья* (St Petersburg, 2003), pp. 127–30.

³⁴ In fact, several hillforts in western Estonia and Saaremaa were built not on hills, but on relatively level ground, with a circular dry-stone wall of limestone, up to ten metres high and topped with further structures, made of timber, built around them for additional defence. The gradient of the outward face of the wall was also about 45 degrees.

³⁵ HCL XVI.4, pp. 108–9; XXIII.8, pp. 162–4; XXVII.6, p. 198.

³⁶ HCL XXVIII.5, p. 204; Brundage, p. 225.

part in field battles.³⁷ Thus, for example, not a word is said about crossbowmen's presence among the crusaders' forces in one of the major field battles – that of St Matthew's Day, on 21 September 1217 –, a battle that the participants in and course of which Henry describes in great detail.³⁸ It is likely that they had been left to defend Riga and the crusaders' other fortified places in the Latvian-Livonian territory, as the main forces set out for Estonia. This was probably done for fear of the Öselians, who are not listed by Henry alongside the warriors of other Estonian provinces who took part in the battle of St Matthew's Day. The Estonians had been raising troops in the late summer of 1217 with the aim of attacking Riga, and they may have agreed to meet the Öselians who would arrive by ship there, as they had done during the previous joint campaigns of 1211 and 1215.

In view of all the attention which Henry gives to the crossbowmen's activities in the siege and defence of forts, it is hard to believe that he would simply have forgotten to mention them in his descriptions of field battles, especially since the presence of Russian archers in a few does get noted by him.³⁹

One reason why the crossbowmen were not involved in field battles may have been the battle tactics of the local peoples, with which the crusaders quickly became familiar. Local forces, this is to say, sought to take cover in forests and groves and fall upon the enemy unexpectedly. In such circumstances, each crossbowman would only have been able to shoot a bolt or two during the opening phase of the battle – a relatively minor contribution. They were of far greater use when left to defend the fortifications, instead.

Henry's Reports and Excavated Crossbow Quarrels

The heads of crossbow bolts found in archaeological excavations of Baltic hillforts confirm that crossbows were actively used in them (Figure 11.1: 1, 3). Since this weapon had been unknown to the local peoples before the arrival of the crusaders, these finds constitute evidence which verifies Henry's reports. Excavations of Estonian hillforts and their surroundings have, for example,

³⁷ When the Estonians laid siege of the Treiden fort, in 1211, the crusaders' crossbowmen holding it did, according to Henry's chronicle, on a couple of occasions come out of the fort (HCL XV.3, pp. 89–91). Nevertheless, these episodes can only be associated with the need to find a better shooting position. Such movements of the crossbowmen are not comparable to classical field battles, in which crossbowmen were assigned a specific position in the field and definite tasks.

³⁸ HCL XXI.2–3, pp. 142–3.

³⁹ HCL XVI.2, pp. 103–4; XXII.3, p. 149.

yielded over 200 iron heads of crossbow bolts of a type that can be dated back to the period 1208–27.

The head of these bolts is pyramidal, its cross-section in the majority of cases square-shaped. Most specimens are relatively slender, probably because these could with some luck penetrate the most common armour of that time, chain mail. Nine out of ten quarrels were attached to the wooden shaft by means of a socket and the rest by a tang.⁴⁰

Such bolt heads have been unearthed at precisely the forts in the siege of which, according to the chronicle, crossbows were actively used. These forts are Dorpat,⁴¹ Odenpäh (Est. Otepää),⁴² Fellin (Est. Viljandi),⁴³ Leole,⁴⁴ Sontagana (Est. Soontagana), Moon (Est. Muhu) and Wolde (Est. Valjala).⁴⁵

More quarrels of a corresponding type have been found at the hillforts of Leal (Est. Lihula),⁴⁶ Warbola (Est. Varbola)⁴⁷ and Reval,⁴⁸ which Henry refers to in passing, without giving details of any military clashes at them or noting the use of crossbows. Quarrels dating from the first quarter of the thirteenth

⁴⁰ Ain Mäesalu, 'Otepää linnuse ammuooleotsad', in *Muinasaja teadus*, vol. 1 (Tallinn, 1991), pp. 163–81 (here 170–2, 174; Figures 1: 1–2, 4, 10; 2: 1–2).

⁴¹ Vilma Trummal, *Arheoloogilised kaevamised Tartu linnusel* (Tartu, 1964), pp. 81–2; Andres Tauri, *Muinas-Tartu. Uurimus Tartu muinaslinnuse ja asula asustusloost* (Tartu and Tallinn, 2001), p. 144, Figure 66: 7, 8.

⁴² Mäesalu, 'Otepää linnuse ammuooleotsad', pp. 170–71, 174; Tables XXIII: 1–2; XXV: 1–2.

⁴³ Arvi Haak and Liina Pärnamäe, 'Arheoloogilised kaevamised Viljandi ordulinnusel 2002.–2003. aastal', in *Viljandi Muuseumi Aastaraamat 2003* (Viljandi, 2004), pp. 62–84 (here 65, Figure 2: 2); Heiki Valk, 'Archaeological Investigations in Late Prehistoric–Early Medieval Viljandi and in Pilistvere Churchyard', in *Archaeological Field Works in Estonia 1999* (Tallinn, 2000), pp. 39–53 (here 46–7, Figure 10: 1–2); Valk, 'Siege Constructions from 1223 in Viljandi', in *Archaeological Field Works in Estonia 2000* (Tallinn, 2001), pp. 65–79 (here 76–7, Figure 14: 2, 4); Valk, 'Excavations in Viljandi: New Data about the Final Period of Iron Age and the Siege of 1223', in *Archaeological Field Works in Estonia 2002* (Tallinn, 2003), pp. 56–70 (here 57, Figure 4: 2–5).

⁴⁴ Harri Moora and Osvald Saadre, 'Lõhavere linnamägi', in *Muistse Eesti linnused* (Tartu, 1939), pp. 139–82 (here 166–8, Figure 114: 2–4).

⁴⁵ Mäesalu, 'Otepää linnuse ammuooleotsad', pp. 170–72, 174.

⁴⁶ Mati Mandel, *Lihula muinas- ja keskaeg* (Tallinn, 2000), Figure 17: 1–2.

⁴⁷ Ülle Tamla and Evald Tõnisson, 'Archäologische Ausgrabungen auf der Wallburg Warbola-Jaanilinn 1988–1989', *Eesti Teaduste Akadeemia Toimetised. Ühiskonnateadused* 39/4 (1990), pp. 423–7 (here Plate XIII: 5–6, 9).

⁴⁸ Susanna Tarakanova and Osvald Saadre, 'Tallinnas 1952.–1953. aastal teostatud arheoloogiliste kaevamiste tulemusi', in *Muistsed asulad ja linnused* (Tallinn, 1955), pp. 11–45 (here Figure 3: 4).



Figure 11.1 The quarrels of the great crossbow and ordinary crossbow bolts from 1223, unearthed during the excavation of hills next to the fort of Fellin (Est. Viljandi)

Source: Photograph: Herki Helves © Museum of Viljandi

century have also been found at Peude (Est. Pöide)⁴⁹ hillfort in Ösel, as well as Keava hillfort in Harrien (Est. Harjumaa).⁵⁰ Peude may have received its share of them from the crossbowmen of the German crusaders' army during its Ösilian campaign, in the winter of 1216. Henry's entry for that year does indeed mention laying siege to a fort, but fails to give the name of it.⁵¹ As for the Keava hillfort, it may have been pelted with the bolts in late 1223 or early 1224 when, according to Henry, the German crusaders were besieging the Lone (Est. Lohu) hillfort, during which siege part of their forces carried the threat of war to three other nearby hillforts – whereupon, as we are told, the latter immediately surrendered.⁵² Keava hillfort may have been one of those three. Yet

⁴⁹ Vello Lõugas and Marika Mägi-Lõugas, 'Investigation of Ancient Monuments at Pöide 1991–1992', *Teaduste Akadeemia Toimetised. Humanitaar- ja Sotsiaalteadused* 43/1 (1994), 27–33 (here 31–2, Plate VII: 4).

⁵⁰ Valter Lang, Andres Tvaauri and Mari-Liis Rohtla, 'The Hill-Fort of Keava', in *Archaeological Field Works in Estonia 2001* (Tallinn, 2002), pp. 65–73 (here 70–71, Figure 6: 1–4).

⁵¹ HCL XIX.9, p. 134.

⁵² HCL XXVII. 6, pp. 198–9.

archaeological excavations at the Keava hillfort indicate that a siege battle was fought there.⁵³

In addition to common crossbow quarrels, three boltheads, considerably larger and about four times heavier, probably used as projectiles for great crossbows, have been found in the territory of modern Estonia and Latvia. One of these was found on a hill right next to the castle of Fellin, and can be associated with the siege of 1223 (Figure 11.1: 2).⁵⁴ Another similar tanged specimen was unearthed in Riga.⁵⁵ And finally, the old town of Dorpat yielded a large socketed quarrel from a great crossbow which can, judging by its shape, also be dated to the first quarter of the thirteenth century and was probably used by the defenders of the Dorpat fort during the 1224 siege.⁵⁶

In those days, the great crossbow was a very modern weapon in Western Europe, the very earliest reports of it dating back only as far as the beginning of the thirteenth century.⁵⁷ Possibly, the first great crossbow brought to the Baltic area may have originally belonged to the Holy Roman Emperor Otto IV (r. 1209–18). Before his death on 18 May 1218, Otto bequeathed his *ballista* in Quedlinburg to crusaders, to be taken beyond the sea. The German historian Bernd Hucker thinks that it need not have been taken out across the Mediterranean, but perhaps instead was taken across the Baltic Sea, to the regions lying ‘beyond’ it.⁵⁸ Apparently, local armourers began to build more such weapons here, modelling them on Otto’s – or some other – *ballista*. These primarily, in all likelihood, were used in the defence of hillforts. During the Middle Ages, the Latin word *ballista* was used first and foremost to denote missile weapons – great crossbows, but sometimes also ordinary crossbows. Henry habitually called ordinary crossbows *ballistae*, so it may have proved difficult for him, upon the arrival of the first real *ballista*, to find a new word for it. Furthermore, as to their construction and possibly also appearance, the crossbow and the great crossbow were fairly similar, the difference lying mainly in their size.

⁵³ Valter Lang and Marge Konsa, ‘Aeg ja muutus interdistsiplinaarsetes kohauuringutes Keava näitel’, in *Linnusest ja linnast. Uurimusi Vilma Trummali auks*, ed. Arvi Haak et al. (Tartu and Tallinn, 2004), pp. 113–35 (here 126–8). See also Chapter 12 by Valter Lang and Heiki Valk in this volume.

⁵⁴ Valk, ‘Excavations in Viljandi’, pp. 57–9, Figure 4: 1.

⁵⁵ Andris Caune and Silvija Tilko, ‘Pētījumi Rīgā, Doma laukumā’, in *Zinātniskās atskaites sesijas materiāli par arheologu un etnogrāfu 1988. un 1989. gada pētījumu rezultātiem* (Riga, 1990), pp. 65–71 (here 68, Figure 15: 1).

⁵⁶ HCL XXVIII.5, pp. 202–4.

⁵⁷ Jean Liebel, *Springalds and Great Crossbows* (London, 1998), pp. 24–7.

⁵⁸ Bernd Ulrich Hucker, *Kaiser Otto IV.* (Hanover, 1990), pp. 183–4, 556–7, 663.

Henry's Terms for Siege Engines

Henry was delighted not only with the crusaders' crossbows, but also their stone-throwing machines, the power and importance of which during the siege of forts he praised enthusiastically. Referring to them in the text of his chronicle, Henry on 19 occasions uses the word *patherellus* or *paterellus*,⁵⁹ while on 24 occasions he uses the term *machina*.⁶⁰ On nine occasions, he tries to specify the nature of the machines by adding an adjective. The term 'small machine' (*machina parva*)⁶¹ occurs once, the term 'smaller machine' (*machina minor* – comparative form of the word *parvus*)⁶² four times. On two occasions we find the expression 'large machine' (*machina magna*),⁶³ and on two occasions the term 'larger machine' (*machina maior* – comparative form of the word *magnus*).⁶⁴

The first impression is that Henry differentiated between 'small machines', 'machines' and 'large machines', which could have been similar in type and appearance, differing from one another only in size. In reality, the issue of these machines is more complicated, particularly when we consider their relation to the paterells.

What Henry is clearly most emphatic about is a 'large machine', which occurs in three episodes. Its earliest appearance in the chronicle occurs in late 1217 or early 1218, when Count Albert von Lauenburg (c. 1182–c. 1245) was planning a campaign against Ösel and 'he had a larger engine made'.⁶⁵ Probably the machine was indeed built, but since the winter was very mild and the sea ice treacherous, the Ösel campaign was cancelled.⁶⁶

Henry next mentions a 'large engine' in February 1220, when German crusaders went in force to besiege the Semgallians' Mesoten fort, taking along 'a great machine and other smaller ones'.⁶⁷ Since Henry makes no reference to the use of stone throwers during any sieges laid over the intervening period, it can be

⁵⁹ HCL X. 9, p. 39; XIV.10, p. 83; XVI.4, p. 108; XXIII.8, p. 162; XXVI.3, p. 188 (3 times); XXVI.4, p. 189; XXVI. 8, p. 191; XXVII.2, p. 195 (twice); XXVII.6, p. 198; XXVIII.3, p. 201; XXVIII.5, pp. 202–3 (3 times); XXX.4, p. 218 (twice); XXX.5, p. 220.

⁶⁰ HCL X.12, p. 42; XIV.5, p. 77; XIV.10, p. 83; XIV.11, p. 84; XVIII.7, p. 121; XXI.5, p. 144; XXIII.8, pp. 162–3 (4 times); XXVI.3, p. 188 (3 times); XXVI.4, p. 189; XXVII.2, p. 195 (3 times); XXVII.6, p. 198; XXVIII.5, pp. 202–3 (4 times); XXX.4, p. 218; XXX.5, p. 220.

⁶¹ HCL X.12, p. 42.

⁶² HCL XIV.10, p. 83; XXIII.8, p. 162; XXVII.2, p. 195; XXVIII.5, p. 202.

⁶³ HCL XXIII.8, p. 162; XXX.5, p. 220.

⁶⁴ HCL XXI.5, p. 144; XXIII.8, p. 163.

⁶⁵ HCL XXI.5, p. 144; Brundage, p. 164.

⁶⁶ HCL XXI.5, p. 144–5.

⁶⁷ HCL XXIII.8, p. 162; Brundage, p. 180.

assumed that the large machine taken along was the very same *machina* that had been built for the Ösel campaign two years earlier.

The last reference to the 'large machine' is made in February 1227, when a large crusading army, together with its auxiliary forces, had captured the hillfort of Moon and began to lay siege to the Wolde fort in Ösel.⁶⁸ Again the chronicler makes no mention of the building of a 'larger machine' in his description of the preparations made for the campaign, thus leaving open the possibility that the machine they took along was again the same one that had been built for another campaign to Ösel, nine years previously.

More problematic is the use of the terms 'small machine', 'machine' and 'paterell', in the text of the chronicle. The small machine as a type of siege engine is explicitly mentioned by Henry only once, in his entry for 1206 when the prince of Polotsk was besieging the hillfort of Holme (Latv. Mārtiņsala) with his forces: 'The Russians also made a little machine like that of the Germans, but not knowing the art of throwing rocks, they hurled them backwards and wounded many of their own men.'⁶⁹

It is somewhat more difficult to figure out what Henry meant by the term 'smaller machine' (*machina minor*), which he employs on four occasions. In these cases it is not always clear whether the chronicler meant by small machines a specific type of weapon or whether he simply wanted to underscore their smaller dimensions in comparison to the large machines.

The latter option indeed seems quite plausible in view of the description of the 1220 campaign against the Mesoten hillfort of the Semgallians, where the crusaders are said to have taken with them 'a great machine and other smaller ones.'⁷⁰

Yet in the campaign against Saccala (Est. Sakala), in early 1211, the crusaders are also said to have brought along a 'smaller machine'.⁷¹ Since the first 'large machine' was only built in the winter of 1217/18, one could assume that in saying so, the chronicler considered this 'small machine' to be a representative of a distinct type. We should not, however, forget that Henry only wrote his chronicle in the years 1224–27, having in the intervening period seen a large machine, too. What is interesting in the given case is that during that self-same Saccala campaign, siege was laid to the hillfort of Fellin, and during it, according to the chronicle, simply a 'machine'⁷² was used, although what had been taken along was a 'smaller machine'.

⁶⁸ HCL XXX.5, p. 220.

⁶⁹ HCL X.12, p. 42; Brundage, p. 63.

⁷⁰ HCL XXIII.8, p. 162.

⁷¹ HCL XIV.10, p. 83.

⁷² HCL XIV.11, p. 84.

Exactly the same goes for the descriptions of the siege of Fellin, in 1223, and that of Dorpat the following summer. At the beginning of both these operations, Henry writes about the crusaders building 'smaller machines' and 'paterells', but then goes on to describe 'machines' and 'paterells' going into action.⁷³ Perhaps what Henry wanted to emphasize at the beginning of his descriptions of those sieges was that the large machine had not been taken along?

Another complex issue is the degree of conformity of paterells and machines described in the chronicle. Was the paterell a distinct class of mechanical artillery completely different from machines, a mere general term for all sorts of stone-throwing siege engines or a term used by Henry as synonymous with some specific machine of a certain size? The text of the chronicle appears to support each and any of these alternative solutions.

Henry repeatedly speaks about the building or using of 'machines and paterells',⁷⁴ an expression apparently implying that these two constitute completely different types of stone throwers. On two occasions, the chronicler puts down the combination 'smaller machines and paterells',⁷⁵ but in both these instances he may have meant simply machines of more modest dimensions, not 'small machines' as representative of a distinct machine type. In 1227, Henry says, a 'larger machine and paterells'⁷⁶ are set up at the Wolde hillfort.

Sometimes it has been surmised that the term 'paterell' was, in fact, used by Henry as a synonym for 'small machine'. Indeed, while describing the crusaders' campaign in early 1211, Henry explicitly states: 'Taking with them the smaller machine, or paterell, ballistas, and other instruments necessary for besieging the fort, they went into Saccala.'⁷⁷ This, to an extent, is confirmed by the description of a 1220 campaign to the Semgallians' Mesoten hillfort, in which the crusaders took with them 'a great machine and other smaller ones'; yet in the description of the siege that followed, it was the 'paterells' that were set up next to the great machine.⁷⁸

Unfortunately, Henry himself complicates the issue by, on two occasions, using the terms 'smaller machines and paterells',⁷⁹ side by side. Furthermore, he sometimes clearly uses the term 'paterells' synonymously with 'machines'.⁸⁰ In a way, his usage is well illustrated by the following passage from the chronicle –

⁷³ HCL XXVII.2, p. 195; XXVIII.5, pp. 202–3.

⁷⁴ HCL XXVI.3, 4, pp. 188–9; XXVII.2, 6, pp. 195, 198; XXVIII.5, p. 203.

⁷⁵ HCL XXVII.2, p. 195; XXVIII.5, p. 202.

⁷⁶ HCL XXX.5, p. 220.

⁷⁷ HCL XIV.10, p. 83; Brundage, p. 104.

⁷⁸ HCL XXIII.8, pp. 162–3.

⁷⁹ HCL XXVII.2, p. 195; XXVIII.5, p. 202.

⁸⁰ HCL XXVI.3, p. 188; XXX.4, p. 218.

mostly identifying, but in one sentence also distinguishing between, machines and paterells. Namely, in 1222, the Öselians went to Warbola 'to study the use of the paterell or the machine which the Danes had given to the people of Warbola as their subjects. They returned to Ösel and began to build paterells and machines. They taught others and each of them made his own machine. All of them came together with seventeen paterells' to besiege the Danish fort.⁸¹

Thus, the issue of the possible (partial) conformity of machines and paterells, as presented in Henry's text, is rather complex – and at times contradictory. It might perhaps be surmised that the chronicler ran into difficulties in trying to employ those terms accurately. Henry may, for instance, quite simply not have known the exact Latin names of the relevant siege engines – and he would have been hard put to find them out. Quite possibly the crusaders – including the very masters who built the engines – who came to the Baltic region were far from proficient in Latin. Mostly they hailed from Germany – but from different parts of the country, and therefore it is quite possible that they used different names for the same machines. Thus, Henry may indeed have faced serious difficulties trying to come up with Latin names for the various types of mechanical artillery. The matter was further complicated by the fact that in his days, nothing like a Europe-wide unified terminology for such weapons had even come into existence yet.

Henry probably just wanted to make himself understood when writing the chronicle, and therefore used both 'machine' and 'paterell' as general terms because warriors of different origin may well, in fact, have used both terms. Perhaps all he meant by using the terms 'machine' and 'paterell' side by side was to specify what he meant by a stone-throwing machine. Occasionally, however, he attempted to characterize these machines in greater detail, and he did so quite successfully – briefly and yet quite clearly – by using just the words 'large' and 'small'.

Types of Siege Engine

All the researchers who have analysed in greater detail the siege engines mentioned in Henry's chronicle have concluded that in the first quarter of the thirteenth century, the main type of engine used in the Baltic region was the counterweight trebuchet (Figure 11.2).⁸²

⁸¹ HCL XXVI.3, p. 188; Brundage, pp. 206–7.

⁸² Ekdahl, 'The Siege Machines', pp. 46–7; Mäesalu, 'Heitemasinad muistses vabadusvõitluses', pp. 69–105; Zeljenkovs, 'Dažas piezīmes par metamo ierīču', pp. 8–32.

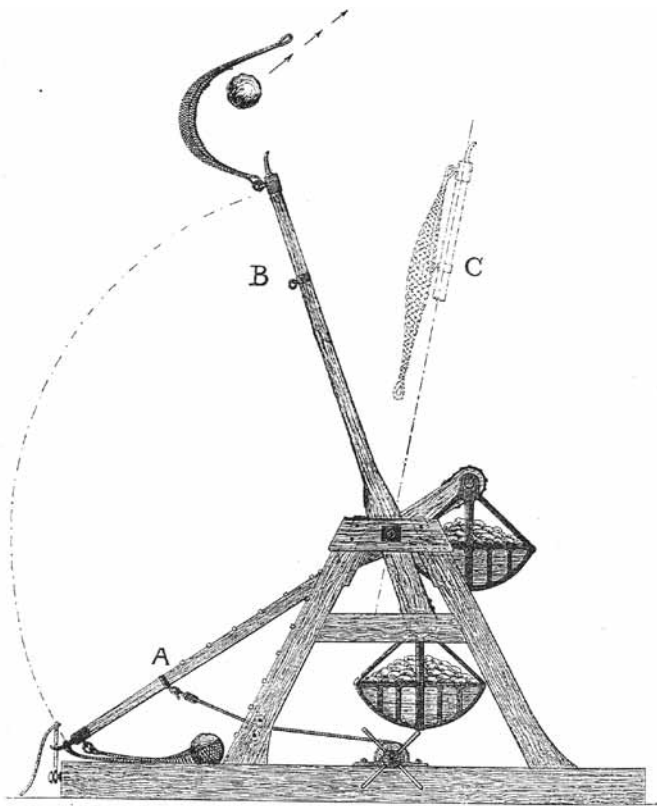


Figure 11.2 The best-known drawing explaining the working principle of the counterweight trebuchet

Note: According to Ralph Payne-Gallwey, *The Crossbow, Medieval and Modern, Military and Sporting. Its Construction, History and Management. With a Treatise on the Balista and Catapult of the Ancients* [London, 1903], p. 310, Fig. 212.

The counterweight trebuchet worked on the principle of leverage. Upon cocking, the longer arm of the throwing beam was pulled down and the shorter arm with the counterweight attached to it was lifted up. The longer arm was held down by means of a strong iron sliphook. The two ends of the sling were fastened to the tip of the longer arm of the beam. One of them was attached permanently, while the other had a loop that was hooked over a curved iron pin attached to the tip of the beam. A stone was placed into the sling and when the trigger was released, the counterweight dropped down and the longer arm of the beam swung upwards. The tip of the longer arm of the beam thus travelled a much greater distance than the shorter arm. Since the rock was placed into a sling, the lever arm was lengthened

even further. When the sling reached a certain height, the loop on the hook at the tip of the beam was released, and the rock was launched.

The direct predecessor of the counterweight trebuchet – the traction trebuchet powered by the pulling force of men – originated in ancient China.⁸³ In recent studies, its invention has been dated back as far as the fifth to the third century BC;⁸⁴ as to the date and route of its arrival in Europe, however, opinions diverge. It has, for instance, been suggested that this engine type had already crossed the Mediterranean and arrived in Southern Europe in the ninth century, and presently spread on from there towards the northern areas.⁸⁵ There is, however, also a more critical position noting that the earliest positive evidence of the use of traction trebuchets in Europe dates back no further than the mid-twelfth century.⁸⁶

The first unequivocal reference to counterweight trebuchets in Islamic countries, Byzantium and Mediterranean Europe, definitely dates back to the mid-twelfth century; the oldest known image, however, comes from Egypt and is dated to the late twelfth century.⁸⁷

The building of reconstructions of such throwing machines and the experiments carried out with them have offered valuable material for comparison to the study of this issue. In the last few decades, quite a number of reconstructions of – mainly – counterweight trebuchets have been built in Germany, England, France, Denmark, Estonia⁸⁸ and elsewhere. Scientific

⁸³ Mark Feuerle, *Blide – Mange – Trebuchet: Technik, Entwicklung und Wirkung des Wurfgeschützes im Mittelalter. Eine Studie zur mittelalterlichen Innovationsgeschichte* (Berlin, 2005), pp. 44–9; Kalervo Huuri, *Zur Geschichte des mittelalterlichen Geschützwesens aus orientalischen Quellen* (Helsinki, 1941), pp. 198–9; Anatolii Kirpichnikov, *Метательная артиллерия Древней Руси* (Moscow, 1958), p. 37; Volker Schmidtchen, 'Büchsen, Bliden und Ballisten. Bernhard Rathgen und das mittelalterliche Geschützwesen', in Bernhard Rathgen, *Das Geschütz im Mittelalter* (Berlin, 1928; repr., Düsseldorf, 1987), pp. V–XLVIII (here XXX); Sergei Shkolyar, *Китайская доогнестрельная артиллерия* (Moscow, 1980), pp. 58–104.

⁸⁴ Ekdahl, 'The Siege Machines', p. 43.

⁸⁵ Josef Alm and Ada Bruhn Hoffmeyer, 'Blide', in *Kulturbistorisk leksikon for nordisk middelalder*, 22 vols (Copenhagen, 1956–78), vol. 1, pp. 679–86 (here 681); Ekdahl, 'The Siege Machines', p. 43.

⁸⁶ Feuerle, *Blide – Mange – Trebuchet*, p. 123.

⁸⁷ Helmut Nickel, 'The Mutual Influence of Europe and Asia in the Field of Arms and Armour', in *A Companion to Medieval Arms and Armour*, ed. David Nicolle (Woodbridge, 2002), pp. 107–25 (here 124).

⁸⁸ Ekdahl, 'The Siege Machines', pp. 29–51; Feuerle, *Blide – Mange – Trebuchet*, pp. 98–110; Michael Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare in the Middle Ages: The English Experience* (New Haven and London, 1996), p. 288; Tanel Saimre, 'Trebuchet – A Gravity-operated

studies casting light onto the mechanical aspects of the engines have yielded valuable additional data; besides, mathematical calculations have been made and computer programs devised to enable simulation experiments to be carried out.⁸⁹

The chronicler has given a graphic and detailed description of the power of the 'large machine' at the siege of the Mesoten hillfort, and since Henry describes the effect of the hits with great precision, there is no reason to suspect him of exaggerating:

At last the larger machine was put up and great rocks were cast at the fort. The men in the fort, seeing the size of the rocks, conceived a great terror. The duke took charge of the machine, shot the first stone, and crushed the enemy's balcony and the men in it. He shot a second one and dislodged the planks and the logs of the rampart. He discharged a third one and pierced and shattered three large logs in the rampart and struck some men. After seeing this, the people in the fort fled from the ramparts and sought safer places. But since they had no refuge, they asked for quarter so that they could come down and make their plea to the bishop.⁹⁰

Of all the medieval types of siege engines, only a large counterweight trebuchet could have used payloads heavy enough to cause the effect described by Henry.

This kind of large stone thrower was the most advanced achievement of contemporary European military technology; in Germany, for example, a machine of comparable dimensions was first used in 1212.⁹¹ Around that time, such large stone-throwing machines operating on the counterweight principle also began to be called by specific names like *trebuchium*, *trebuch*, *trebuchet*, *tribock*.⁹² Had these terms not yet reached Henry's ears? At the same time, the possibility that the chronicler only added the adjective 'large' to the habitual term 'machine' in the interests of clarity, because in appearance it was similar

Siege Engine', *Estonian Journal of Archaeology* 10/1 (2006), 61–80; Peter Vemming Hansen, 'Experimental Reconstruction of a Medieval Trebuchet', *Acta Archaeologica* 63 (1992), 189–208; Peter Vemming Hansen, *Middelalderens mekaniske apparater til krigsburg* (Nykøbing F., 1998).

⁸⁹ Paul E. Chevedden, Les Eigenbrod, Vernard Foley and Werner Soedel, 'The Trebuchet', *Scientific American* (July 1995), 66–71; Werner Soedel and Vernard Foley, 'Ancient Catapults', *Scientific American* (March 1979), 150–60.

⁹⁰ HCL XXIII.8, p. 163; Brundage, p. 181.

⁹¹ Rudolf Schneider, *Die Artillerie des Mittelalters* (Berlin, 1910), p. 28; Rathgen, *Das Geschütz im Mittelalter*, pp. 610–11.

⁹² Huuri, *Zur Geschichte*, pp. 63–4; Schneider, *Die Artillerie des Mittelalters*, p. 28.

to other stone throwers already known to him and only differed from them in size, should not be ruled out, either.

Keeping in mind Henry's account, I hypothesized in an article published a few years ago that during the siege of the Mesoten fort, the 'large machine' hurled rocks weighing about 100 kilograms.⁹³ Since then, it has proven possible to obtain new data to support this hypothesis. The first large trebuchet (*triboc*), commissioned by Emperor Otto IV of Germany, was used in 1212 at the siege of the Weissensee castle in Thuringia. Archaeological excavations of the site have brought to light four rocks probably hurled into the fort with that machine, each of them weighing around 100 kilograms.⁹⁴

But what would the small machines, machines and paterells that Henry differentiated between have looked like? In earlier Estonian and Latvian historiography, torsion-powered catapults have often been presented as an example of the stone-throwing machines of that period (Figure 11.3). The catapult's timber beam looks like a large spoon and its lower end is placed between skeins of ropes tightly twisted to achieve considerable tension. It has also been suggested that catapults may have been used for hurling incendiary projectiles. Henry indeed notes in his chronicle that during the 1206 siege of the Holme hillfort, the crusaders threw 'fire'⁹⁵ with their paterells, and during the 1224 siege of Dorpat they hurled 'glowing irons or pots of fire'.⁹⁶ Since it is not possible to throw red hot pieces of iron with the leather sling of a counterweight trebuchet, it has been surmised that torsion catapults were used for that purpose.⁹⁷

In fact, however, it was possible to make trebuchet slings of fireproof materials, too. Olaus Magnus, for instance, has described and illustrated with a drawing how, as late as the sixteenth century, men in arms threw red hot iron balls with their hand slings. The slings they used were made of small iron rings (just like chain mail), whereas iron chains were used as sling cords.⁹⁸

Besides, the whole issue of the wider spread of catapults in the Middle Ages has been seriously questioned. The problem is that the catapults depicted in

⁹³ Mäesalu, 'Heitemasinad muistses vabadusvõitluses', p. 94.

⁹⁴ See <<http://www.runneburg.de/steinschleuder.html>> (visited 28 January 2009).

⁹⁵ HCL X.9, p. 39.

⁹⁶ HCL XXVIII.5, p. 203. It is unknown whether the 'pots of fire' could have been vessels filled with some kind of combustible liquid. But it would seem more logical to hypothesize that in order to make their throwing easier, hot pieces of iron were placed into clay pots.

⁹⁷ Ekdahl, 'The Siege Machines', p. 41.

⁹⁸ Olaus Magnus, *Die Wunder des Nordens*, ed. Elena Balzamo and Reinhard Kaiser (Frankfurt am Main, 2006), pp. 214–15.

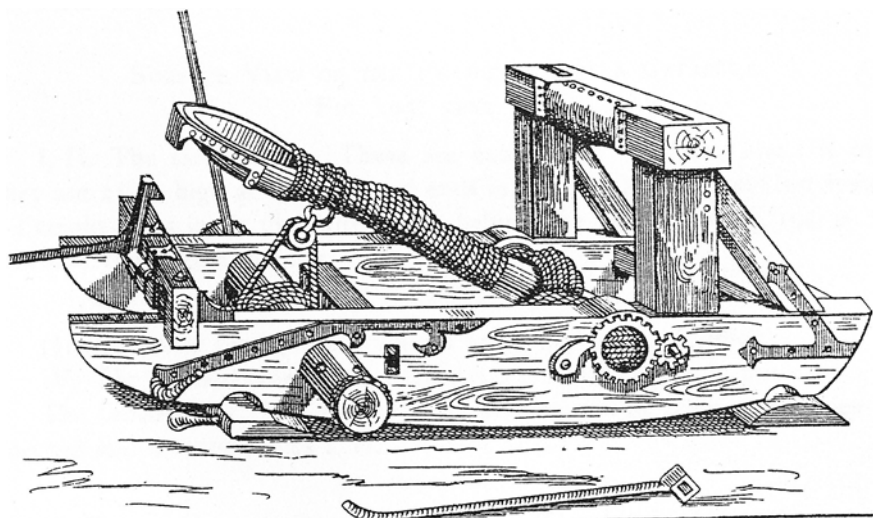


Figure 11.3 A drawing of a siege catapult

Note: According to Ralph Payne-Gallwey, *The Crossbow, Medieval and Modern, Military and Sporting. Its Construction, History and Management. With a Treatise on the Balista and Catapult of the Ancients* [London, 1903], p. 277, Fig. 192

thirteenth- to sixteenth-century drawings are of a very primitive construction.⁹⁹ Looking at these drawings, one is tempted to ask, could such machines have flung a stone weighing just a few kilograms even as far as a few dozen metres?

Frequently, however, studies in weapons history also feature another drawing of a constructionally more perfect catapult.¹⁰⁰ Its first publication notes that the original drawing of the catapult is to be found in a fifteenth-century manuscript held in the Bibliothèque Nationale, in Paris.¹⁰¹ A few years ago Mark Feuerle,

⁹⁹ Schneider, *Die Artillerie des Mittelalters*, Figure 3, 6; Huuri, *Zur Geschichte*, Figure 8; Schmidtchen, 'Büchsen, Bliden und Ballisten', p. XXIX; Christopher Gravett, *Medieval Siege Warfare* (London, 1990), Figure 2, p. 29.

¹⁰⁰ Hans Aufheimer, *Schiffsbewaffnung. Von den Anfängen bis zur Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Rostock, 1983), p. 20, Plate I; William Reid, *Buch der Waffen. Von der Steinzeit bis zur Gegenwart* (Düsseldorf and Vienna, 1976), pp. 26–7; Schmidtchen, *Mittelalterliche Kriegsmaschinen*, Figure 51.

¹⁰¹ Ralph Payne-Gallwey, *The Crossbow, Medieval and Modern, Military and Sporting. Its Construction, History and Management. With a Treatise on the Balista and Catapult of the Ancients* (London, 1903), Figure 194.

who studies the history of German catapults, travelled to Paris in order to study the relevant manuscript, but this particular drawing was not to be found in it.¹⁰²

According to this drawing, reconstructions of the more perfect catapult have been built, and the experiments conducted with them demonstrated that even such engines could only cast stones weighing a few kilograms, and not very far at that.¹⁰³ The hurling power of such catapults was significantly inferior to that of the counterweight trebuchets used at the time, and therefore it is unlikely that they would have been used in the Baltic crusade.

Furthermore, it is worth considering whether the small machines and paterells mentioned by Henry may not have included traction trebuchets, as has often been surmised. Tests conducted with reconstructions of this type of trebuchet have yielded reasonably good results. The traction trebuchet of Caerphilly Castle in Wales, for instance, could throw a rock weighing five kilograms a distance of 110 metres when powered by the pulling force of six men.¹⁰⁴ In experiments carried out with the same type of engine in the campus of Toronto University, a 14-member team was able to fling a 3.1 kilogram stone a distance of 145 metres, in its record try.¹⁰⁵

The data provided by Henry's accounts, however, demonstrate that heavier rocks were hurled with the small machines and paterells used in the Baltic crusade. In 1211, for example, the crusaders besieging the hillfort at Fellin brought a smaller machine or paterell with them, the power of which was described by Henry as follows: 'The Germans built a machine and, by hurling stones night and day, they broke down the fortified places and killed men and innumerable beasts of burden in the fort. Since the Esthonians had never seen such things, they had not strengthened their houses against the force of such missiles.'¹⁰⁶ The power of the paterell is again alluded to by the chronicler in his account of the 1212 siege of the Sattesele hillfort, when the Germans 'destroyed the ramparts of the fort and killed many men and beasts with the many large rocks which they shot into the fort with their paterells.'¹⁰⁷ When the Öselians were besieging the Danish fort in Ösel, in 1222, they shot, according to the chronicler, 'many great stones continually for five days' with 17 paterells, until the defenders were forced to surrender.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰² Mark Feuerle, 'Das Hebelwurfgeschütz. Eine technische Innovation des Mittelalters', *Technikgeschichte* 69/1 (2002), 1–39 (here 34).

¹⁰³ Ekdahl, 'The Siege Machines', p. 41; Feuerle, *Blide – Mange – Trebuchet*, p. 139.

¹⁰⁴ Ekdahl, 'The Siege Machines', p. 41.

¹⁰⁵ Feuerle, *Blide – Mange – Trebuchet*, pp. 107–9.

¹⁰⁶ HCL XIV.10–11, pp. 83–4; Brundage, p. 106.

¹⁰⁷ HCL XVI.4, p. 108; Brundage, p. 127.

¹⁰⁸ HCL XXVI.3, p. 188; Brundage, p. 207.

The Construction and Transportation of the Machines

Henry tells us that sometimes the crusaders built their siege engines before the start of the campaign and hauled them along to their destination, whereas on other occasions, his accounts of sieges involve the construction of the machines in situ. On a few occasions, the machines are transported from Riga to Estonia, which may have meant a journey as long as a couple of hundred kilometres. This is probably the reason why among the illustrations in earlier history books was often a picture of a reconstructed catapult, with wheels attached to its undercarriage.¹⁰⁹

But let us take a closer look at the campaigns described by Henry. It is interesting that all the campaigns on which the crusaders took along their stone-throwing machines took place in the winter. This was the case with the campaign against Fellin in 1211, the planned campaign against Ösel in late 1217, and the siege of the Mesoten hillfort in 1220; the machines were probably also taken to Ösel in 1227.¹¹⁰ Yet it is fairly difficult to imagine machines with wheels being dragged through snow. Since the Baltic region did not have proper roads at that time, the transportation of the machines over a landscape of forests and marshes must have been even more difficult during the summer months.

In all likelihood, the trebuchets were dismantled for transportation and taken along on winter campaigns because then the different parts of the machines could be loaded on sleighs. It is, of course, possible that only the most important parts of the machines, such as the hurling beams of counterweight trebuchets which had to be made of choice timber, got taken along. The undercarriages and lateral support beams were framed on the spot from whatever timber could be felled there. The last assumption is supported by the fact that, on a few occasions, Henry's accounts suggest that it took quite some time – as long as a few days – to make the machines operational.

The projectile powers of counterweight trebuchets depended to a considerable degree on the relative dimensions of the machine's individual parts – that is, on the machine's proportions. Therefore, it should not be considered impossible that the masters had worked out standard measurements for trebuchets of various sizes, and that the machines were consistently built to the these specific measurements.

¹⁰⁹ The author of this reconstruction picture is the well-known nineteenth-century French architect and historian of architecture, Eugène Viollet-le-Duc. Medieval sources, however, include no drawings of a machine of this type. See Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, *Dictionnaire raisonné de l'architecture française du XI^e au XVI^e siècle*, 10 vols (Paris, 1854–68), vol. 5, p. 222.

¹¹⁰ HCL XIV.10, p. 83; XXI.5, p. 144; XXIII.8, p. 162; XXX.4, p. 218.

Stone-Throwing Machines as Siege and Defence Weapons

Counterweight trebuchets were fairly efficient weapons, but certain peculiarities contingent on their construction had to be taken into account in their operation. A completed and emplaced trebuchet could only throw rocks in one predetermined direction. In order to shift the shooting sector, the cumbersome machine had to be moved – a time-consuming job, particularly when the counterweight bucket held several tonnes of rocks. The stone thrower was therefore most efficiently used against fixed targets. The best target was naturally a hillfort – which is the reason why the engines were used primarily as siege weapons.

According to Henry, the crusaders used stone-throwing machines in the siege of hillforts on at least nine occasions: at Holme in 1206, Fellin in 1211, Sattesele in 1212, Mesoten in 1220, Fellin in 1223, Lone and Dorpat in 1224, and Moon and Wolde in 1227.¹¹¹ All these sieges ended in the successful capture of the forts, and frequently the siege engines played a crucial role in it. The only failed attempt was the Russians' 1206 siege of Holme, mentioned previously in this chapter.¹¹²

The first of the Estonians to learn to build stone-throwing machines were the Öselians, and in 1222 they used them with great success during their siege of the Danish fort in Ösel.¹¹³ In all likelihood, the Öselians used them again in 1223, when they – having joined forces with other Estonians and Russians – maintained their siege of the Danish fort of Reval for four weeks. The chronicler does not mention the use of mechanical artillery in his account of the siege, but its employment is suggested by Henry's comment that the besiegers 'tried to take the fort of the Danes, using the skills of the Germans'.¹¹⁴

According to such reports as had reached Henry, the Öselians taught other Estonians to build such war machines as well.¹¹⁵ Describing the events of 1223, the chronicler notes that Estonians 'fortified their strongholds most firmly. They built paterells in all their forts'.¹¹⁶ Up until then, according to Henry, the machines had only been used by the forces besieging hillforts, with the one exception of Riga defending itself against an attack by the Curonians in 1210,¹¹⁷ which the chronicler unfortunately, however, does not discuss in any greater detail.

¹¹¹ HCL X.9, p. 39; XIV.11, p. 84; XVI.4, p. 108; XXIII.8, pp. 162–3; XXVII.2, 6, pp. 195, 198; XXVIII.5, pp. 202–3; XXX.4, 5, pp. 218, 220.

¹¹² HCL X.12, p. 42; Brundage, p. 63. See footnote 69 above.

¹¹³ HCL XXVI.3, p. 188.

¹¹⁴ HCL XXVII.3, p. 197; Brundage, p. 217.

¹¹⁵ HCL XXVI.4, p. 189.

¹¹⁶ HCL XXVI.8, p. 191; Brundage, p. 210.

¹¹⁷ HCL XIV.5, p. 77.

The accounts Henry gives of the sieges of Fellin in 1223, Dorpat in 1224 and Moon in 1227, on the other hand, also indicate how Estonians used these projectile-throwing machines in the defence of their hillforts.¹¹⁸ One might think the defenders of the fort would try to directly bombard the enemy's soldiers with their stones. In reality, however, once a trebuchet had been set up, it could only hurl stones in one predetermined direction and to a certain distance – probably up to approximately 150 metres. Experienced besiegers had only to observe the first hurled stones to know the possible directions and ranges. Accordingly, the besiegers set their camps up outside the range of the defenders' throwing machines and crossbows.

Therefore it seems more plausible that the defenders would aim their stone-throwing machines at the enemy's siege engines in general, and their trebuchets in particular. After all, the besiegers' engines constituted a grave threat to the defenders' fortifications, buildings, and to all the people inside the fort. In his descriptions of the sieges of Fellin (1223), Dorpat (1224) and Moon (1227), Henry clearly opposes the stone throwers among the Estonian defenders to those of the besieging crusaders. Take the siege of Dorpat, for example: 'those who were in the fort likewise constructed machines and paterells against the Christians' machines.'¹¹⁹ The activities of the defenders of Fellin are characterized with equal clarity: 'they had built paterells and machines against the Christians' machines. They fought against one another for many days.'¹²⁰ The account of the siege of the Moon hillfort, too, contains similar information.¹²¹ Henry's text must in those instances indeed be understood quite literally. Thus, the chronicle allows us to conclude that with the stones flung by their machines, the defenders of these forts attempted to hit the besiegers' trebuchets and the teams operating them.

The trebuchets cast rocks in a high arcing trajectory, and if the fort was located on top of a hill, the defenders had a certain advantage over their enemy – that is, presuming equal capacity of machines, the defenders' rocks would have flown farther. The disadvantage, however, was lack of space in the fort courtyard, plus the fact that in order to avoid smashing their own fortifications from the inside, they had to hurl the stones in a relatively high arc.

A clear rule applied to the operation of counterweight throwing machines – the larger they were and the heavier was the counterweight, the more massive could be the stones and the greater the range of their flight. Besides these two indicators, the machines' capacity and the projectiles' range were

¹¹⁸ HCL XXVII.2, p. 195; XXVIII.5, p. 203; XXX.4, p. 218.

¹¹⁹ HCL XXVIII.5, p. 203; Brundage, p. 224.

¹²⁰ HCL XXVII.2, p. 195; Brundage, p. 215.

¹²¹ HCL XXX.4, p. 218.

also influenced by the length of the throwing beam or the ratio of its two arms, the length of the sling and the curve of the hook at the tip of the beam.

It is generally assumed that the virtues most sought after in the construction of these machines were accuracy and heavy payloads, in order to cause greater damage. But as we saw above, in the 1220s the stone-throwing machines set up by the Estonians in their hillforts forced the crusaders to emplace their machines quite far from the fort and also to a relatively elevated location.

Archaeological excavations have given rare hints at the possible emplacement of the crusaders' trebuchets in the 1223 siege of Fellin. From 1999 onwards, excavations conducted under the general supervision of archaeologist Heiki Valk have been ongoing on the detached, relatively small and rounded hills more than a hundred metres south of the Fellin hillfort (see Map 12.2 in Chapter 12 by Valter Lang and Heiki Valk in this volume). It emerged that a thick layer of soil had been heaped on top of them. Archaeological finds pointed to the possibility that in the summer of 1223, the crusaders had their auxiliary forces raise and reshape these hillocks in order to form foundations for the emplacement of their stone-throwing machines.¹²² Analogous data pointing to extensive earthworks undertaken by the besiegers in order to position their mechanical artillery have emerged elsewhere, too. According to the Russian *letopis'ŷ*, for example, a hillock was heaped up for trebuchets during the siege of Novhorod-Siverskyi (Russ. Novgorod-Seversky).¹²³

The excavations of the hills surrounding the Fellin stronghold yielded numerous heads of crossbow quarrels probably shot out by the Estonian defenders of the fort attempting to stop the ongoing earthworks and, later, the building and operation of the stone throwers. This is also alluded to by Henry in his description of that siege: 'They put up paterells and smaller machines; they built a tall and very strong wooden tower, which they pushed up to the moat so that they would be able to dig at the fort from below. They were very much hindered by the ballistarii of the men in the fort.'¹²⁴ Thus, the quarrels discovered in the mounds heaped up as foundations for the trebuchets clearly indicate that the descriptions of sieges in Henry's chronicle must indeed be read literally, and in certain cases their information is borne out by archaeological finds.

¹²² Valk, 'Archaeological Investigations', pp. 46–7, Figure 10: 1–2; Valk, 'Siege Constructions', pp. 76–7, Figure 14: 2, 4; Valk, 'Excavations in Viljandi', p. 57, Figure 4: 2–5; Valk, 'New Data about the Besieging Constructions from 1223 in Viljandi', in *Archaeological Field Works in Estonia 2005* (Tallinn, 2006), pp. 119–26.

¹²³ Kirpichnikov, *Метательная артиллерия*, p. 28

¹²⁴ HCL XXVII.2, p. 195, Brundage, p. 215.

Conclusions

In the above, we could be persuaded that the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia is a very valuable source for the study of early thirteenth-century weapons and the tactical aspects of their use. Henry's main focus was on crossbows and stone-throwing machines, and analysis of his text demonstrates that these weapons played a very significant role in the battles of the Baltic crusade.

Laying siege to the hillforts of local peoples inhabiting the territories of modern Estonia and Latvia, the crusaders used crossbows, great crossbows and siege engines of the most modern design of their day. At the same time, crossbows also played a very important part in the defence of the crusaders' own strongholds.

Since the local peoples were unfamiliar with such siege engines, their use initially brought great success to the crusaders besieging local forts. The stone-throwing machines were probably built in various (perhaps three) sizes, denoted by Henry in his chronicle with the words 'small machine', 'large machine' and simply 'machine'. In addition, the chronicler used the word 'paterell', although probably just synonymously with 'machine'. Since the principal term used in the chronicle is 'machine', the various engines may have been fairly similar as to their type and appearance, differing from one another only in their size. The contraption identified as the 'large machine' could only have been a counterweight trebuchet because no other type of medieval siege engine could have hurled rocks capable of wreaking such havoc as Henry describes in his account of the siege of the Mesoten hillfort. This in turn leads us to the conclusion that the 'machines' and 'small machines' could also have been counterweight trebuchets.

As the crusade advanced, Estonians adopted both crossbows and stone-throwing machines as part of their own armaments, and successfully used them in 1222 to 1227, both in their sieges of the crusaders' strongholds and in the defence of their own forts. Probably due to their skilful use of these weapons and a general advance in their warfare skills, the Estonians were now capable of holding out in their forts for much longer, and the crusaders had to use significantly larger forces than before in order to capture them. The siege of Dorpat, for instance, even failed twice, and on the third time, in the summer of 1224, the Estonians only surrendered after a two-week siege.

In broad terms, the information provided by Henry's chronicle of Livonia on these weapons and the mode of their employment corresponds fairly well with the archaeological evidence produced by the excavations of local hillforts and their surroundings. Even though certain exceptions (great crossbows, the unresolved issue of the siege of the Keava hillfort) must be admitted, in general the data of Henry's chronicle can be deemed fairly trustworthy.

Chapter 12

An Archaeological Reading of the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia: Events, Traces, Contexts and Interpretations

Valter Lang and Heiki Valk

Introduction

The interpretation of chronicles, like that of any other books written long ago, differs depending on the interests of the reader.¹ One can distinguish various readings, such as the historical reading, the ethnographic reading, the linguistic reading, and so on. As the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia was written in the transitional period from prehistoric to historical times in Estonia and Latvia, it has also always been of interest to prehistoric archaeologists, who are usually not involved with written sources, at least not in this part of the world. This is perhaps due to the circumstance that prehistoric societies, the main objective of archaeological research, which are often mute and inaccessible to us, practically come to life on the pages of the chronicle, or at least we can believe and imagine that they have come to life.

In contrast to historians who work with written sources, archaeologists study the past by reading historical information from material remains. Archaeological sources consist of material objects: artefacts, monuments, sites and landscapes. Nevertheless, no antiquity or monument is in itself a direct source about the past. Artefacts and objects are silent. They only become historical sources and tools for reconstructing the past through archaeological interpretation.

In order to possess value as a source of historical interpretations, any archaeological object or site must have a context. Antiquities in an antique shop without any information about their origin cannot serve as source material for archaeological research. The more context we possess, the more the archaeological

¹ This research was supported by the European Union through the European Regional Development Fund (Centre of Excellence in Cultural Theory), grant no. 8510 awarded by the Estonian Science Foundation and targeted financed research theme 'Social, Economic and Cultural Processes in Estonia in Prehistoric, Medieval and Modern Times'.

record can tell us about the past. The context may consist of, or be reconstructed by, other antiquities, monuments or space, but it may also be provided by written sources. Henry's chronicle surrounds the archaeological record from the early thirteenth century with a definite context, also challenging archaeologists to make interpretations of finds and findings that would otherwise be difficult to explain. The written data, however, reflect only certain aspects of the past, which are selected and often unilateral. In order to interpret the written texts, one must know the context, which can be provided by archaeology.

In this chapter we would like to analyse how Henry's chronicle has been and can be used in archaeological research; what, in other words, the possibilities are for an archaeological reading of this chronicle. We define the term 'archaeological reading of chronicles' as the three or more different but interrelated approaches to how chronicles such as Henry's one can be used in archaeological research. The first of these approaches focuses on the reading and archaeological interpretation of individual facts, events or phenomena mentioned in the chronicle. The second uses the chronicle as a basis for larger-scale archaeological interpretations – with the aim of reconstructing certain historical events or social phenomena not directly reflected in the chronicle. The third approach aims to analyse the general context concealed behind the individual facts presented by Henry. Below we shall examine these three approaches in greater detail and also offer selected examples based on recent case studies.²

Readings of Individual Facts, Events and Phenomena

At this level of reading, archaeology is, in a sense, in the service of historical research. Specifically, it serves as a source for checking and specifying a chronicle's information on the basis of archaeological evidence (for example, localizing the strongholds or other places mentioned in the chronicle; connecting the destruction horizons in the stratigraphy of strongholds with certain campaigns described in the chronicle, and so on).³ Archaeology also enables us to add new details or

² Cases 1, 2 and 4 are analysed by Heiki Valk; cases 3 and 5 by Valter Lang.

³ 'Stronghold' and 'fort' are used as general terms of equivalent meaning. 'Hillfort' designates strongholds located on hills or on places that can be perceived in the landscape as hills (for example, forts located on the tip of a promontory or the forts of Dorpat and Fellin which eventually form a part of the edge plateau of a big valley, separated from it by natural valleys and a moat). 'Ring fort' designates the west Estonian forts that are protected mainly by a circular rampart.

facts to those known from the chronicle, thus making it possible to present new historical information.⁴

One area in which archaeology can help history is the identification of sites and toponyms, first and foremost the strongholds mentioned by Henry. Map. 12.1 shows the location of Estonian strongholds from the final stage of the Late Iron Age (mid-eleventh to early thirteenth centuries) and the forts that were under siege during the crusades in the early thirteenth century (according to Henry). The majority of the forts mentioned by him have been localized with greater or lesser certainty; however, there are still some whose exact location is unknown (Owele and Purke somewhere in either southern Estonia or northern Latvia, and Maianpathe and Pachalle somewhere in western Estonia). Estonian strongholds from the time of the crusades also offer an excellent opportunity to verify the reliability of Henry's information on the basis of the archaeological record.

Case 1. Crossbow Bolts: A Tool to Verify Henry's Reliability

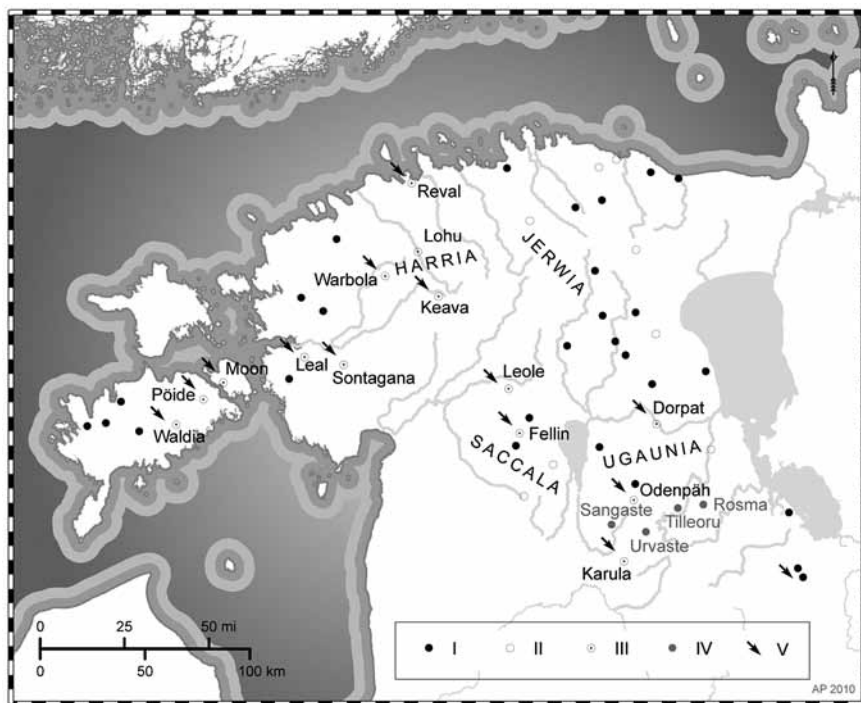
Certain specific types of crossbow bolts that can be dated to the period of the Estonian crusades, or up to the 1230s–40s at the latest, offer a good opportunity to verify the reliability of Henry's information.⁵ Crossbow bolts from Henry's time have been found at several strongholds in Estonia (Map 12.1: V). According to a study by Ain Mäesalu⁶ there are 46 finds from the hillfort of Lõhavere,⁷

⁴ In addition, there are studies in which history has instead been put in the service of archaeology: they are either analytical or simply illustrative uses of the chronicle's information in the study of archaeological objects. The main aim of this type of study is merely to achieve a better understanding of some specific archaeological features (for example, fortification details of strongholds, weaponry). Just to mention one of these, we refer to Evald Tõnisson's discussion of the meaning of terms such as *summitas castri*, *municio* and *summitas municionis* used by Henry in the description of the sieges of many hillforts (for example, Fellin, Lõhavere, Dorpat). Mostly on the basis of Henry's descriptions, Tõnisson was able to interpret corresponding archaeological evidence and reconstruct the nature of the tower-like defence construction of prehistoric Estonian hillforts. See Evald Tõnisson, 'Summitas castri tähendusest Henriku Liivimaa kroonikas', in *Eesti ajaloo probleeme. ENSV TA korrespondentliikme A. Vassara 70. sünniaastapäevale pühendatud teadusliku konverentsi ettekannete teesid* (18. nov. 1981), ed. Enn Tarvel (Tallinn, 1981), pp. 174–81; Tõnisson, *Eesti muinaslinnad*, ed. Ain Mäesalu and Heiki Valk (Tartu and Tallinn, 2008), p. 82.

⁵ Ain Mäesalu, 'Otepää linnuse ammuoleotsad', in *Muinasaja teadus*, vol. 1 (Tallinn, 1991), pp. 163–81 (bolt types A I, B I, C I and II).

⁶ Mäesalu, 'Otepää linnuse ammuoleotsad', pp. 170 and 174.

⁷ The names of Estonian strongholds, except for those named by Henry, are given here in the form in which they appear in their recently published catalogue: 'Eesti muinaslinnade kataloog', in Tõnisson, *Eesti muinaslinnad*, pp. 177–333.



Map 12.1 Estonian strongholds from the mid-eleventh to early thirteenth centuries

Key: I – fort; II – supposed fort; III – fort besieged in the early thirteenth-century crusades (after Henry and archaeological data); IV – unfinished fort, probably constructed or re-constructed during the crusades (in 1223?); V – finds of crusade-period crossbow bolts found at strongholds.

which has been identified with Henry's *Castrum Leole*⁸ since the late nineteenth century, and 67 finds from Odenpäh (Est. Otepää), which was besieged by the crusaders and jointly settled by the Estonians and Germans in 1215–23.⁹ There are also some finds from Reval (Est. Tallinn),¹⁰ where the Estonians had a battle with the Danes in 1219 and where the fort was besieged by the Russians and Estonians in 1223. Henry mentions the Danes using crossbows and the

⁸ HCL XVIII.7, p. 120.

⁹ HCL XII.6, p. 63; XX.5, 7, p. 137, 139.

¹⁰ Oral data by Ain Mäesalu; one of the finds is recorded in Susanna Tarakanova and Osvald Saadre, 'Tallinnas 1952.–1953. aastal teostatud arheoloogiliste kaevamiste tulemusi', in *Muistsed asulad ja linnused* (Tallinn, 1955), pp. 11–45 (here Figure 3: 4).

besiegers trying to conquer the fort using the Germans' besieging techniques.¹¹ Eleven such bolts come from Sontagana (Est. Soontagana), which was besieged in 1210/11 and 1216.¹² Some bolts of this type were found at Warbola (Est. Varbola),¹³ mentioned by Henry as an important centre that was jointly inhabited by the Estonians and the Danes from the Danish invasion of 1219 to the uprising of 1222.¹⁴ Bolt finds from the settlement of Leal (Est. Lihula)¹⁵ may be related to the battle of 1220 between the Öselians and the Swedes, who had emerged from the fort.¹⁶ Such bolts have been found in most high concentration in Fellin (Est. Viljandi): there are over 50 bolts from the hillocks south of the order castle, and at least two from the castle itself.¹⁷ Henry describes in detail two sieges of Fellin, in 1223 also mentioning the use of crossbows by both sides (see also case 2).¹⁸ There are also some finds of crossbow bolts of the crusades era from the hillfort of Dorpat (Est. Tartu), which was besieged in 1224,¹⁹ and from the cultural layers of the city-centre area.²⁰ Finds of such bolts from the ring forts of Estonian islands – six items from Waldia (Ger. Wolde, Est. Valjala) ring fort in Ösel (Est. Saaremaa) and twelve from Moon (Est. Muhu)²¹ – are remains of the great military raid of 1227, during which both forts were besieged.²² Evidently, some bolts from Pöide (Ger. Peude) ring fort²³ can be connected to the same campaign, concerning which Henry mentions the crusaders plundering the island. The finds of four such crossbow bolts from Keava hillfort (see case 3) may belong to the context of the raid on Harria (Est. Harjumaa, Ger. Harrien)

¹¹ HCL XXVII.3, p. 197: '... et temptabant secundum artem Theutonicorum castrum capere Danorum et non valebant.'

¹² HCL XIV.10, p. 91; XIX.8, p. 133.

¹³ Ülle Tamla and Evald Tõnisson, 'Исследования на городище Варбола-Яанилинн', *Eesti NSV Teaduste Akadeemia Toimetised. Ühiskonnateadused* 35/4 (1986), 373–7 (here 376, Figure 2).

¹⁴ HCL XXIII.9, p. 167; XXVI.3, 5, pp. 188–9.

¹⁵ Mati Mandel, *Lihula muinas- ja keskaeg* (Tallinn, 2000), Figure 17: 1–3.

¹⁶ HCL XXIV.3, pp. 172–3.

¹⁷ Older finds, from the excavations of the nineteenth century, have not been considered here.

¹⁸ HCL XIV.11, pp. 83–4, XXVII.2, pp. 195–6; see case 2.

¹⁹ HCL XXVIII.5–7, pp. 202–5.

²⁰ Andres Tvauri, *Muinas-Tartu. Uurimus Tartu muinaslinnuse ja asula asustusloost* (Tartu and Tallinn, 2001), p. 144.

²¹ Mäesalu, 'Otepää linnuse ammuoleotsad', p. 170.

²² HCL XXX.4–5, pp. 217–21.

²³ Vello Lõugas and Marika Mägi-Lõugas, 'Investigation of Ancient Monuments at Pöide 1991–1992', *Eesti NSV Teaduste Akadeemia Toimetised. Ühiskonnateadused* 43/1 (1991), 27–33 (here Plate VII: 4).

in early 1224, when Henry mentions activities against the major *castrum Lone* and three minor forts.²⁴

Thus Henry's information correlates closely with the archaeological record: most of the above-mentioned finds of crossbow bolts come from strongholds, the besieging or use of which was mentioned by him. The only exceptions are Pöide, Keava, Karula and Aakre (see pp. 312, 307) which are not mentioned directly in the chronicle, but finds of bolts there can still be related to specific raids recorded by Henry.

Due to this positive correlation, the absence of such crossbow bolts has even been regarded as a chronological landmark – to distinguish among forts from the Late Iron Age those that were in use in the era of the crusades from those that were deserted somewhat earlier. On such a basis, the hillforts of Naanu and Sinialliku, for instance, have been dated to a time preceding the crusades and the conquest.²⁵

Case 2. The Siege of Fellin in 1223

Another case in which Henry's information can be compared and verified using archaeological methods is the siege of Fellin stronghold between 1 and 15 August 1223. In relation to this siege, the archaeological evidence once again supports Henry's account. Henry writes of the siege of Fellin by 8,000 men as follows: 'They set up trebuchets and smaller machines. They were very much hindered by the ballistarii of the men in the fort, for the latter had a great many of the ballistas of the brothers of the militia which they used against the Christians' ballistas, and they had built trebuchets and machines against the Christians' machines.'²⁶

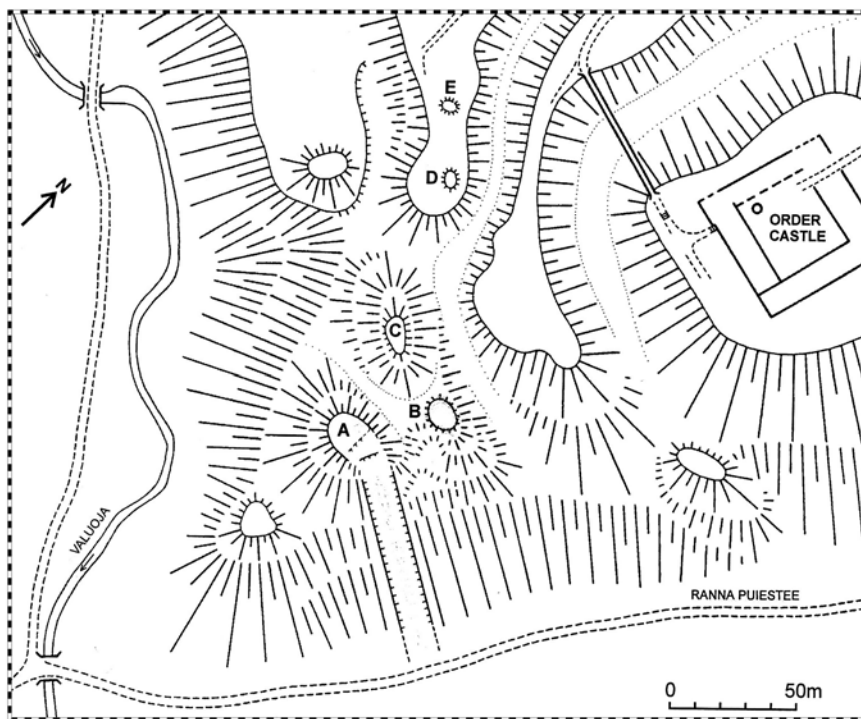
Excavations on hills between 110 and 140 metres south of the Order castle of Fellin in 1999–2007²⁷ have uncovered heaped-up artificial hillocks of sand, soil

²⁴ HCL XXVII.6, p. 198.

²⁵ Harri Moora, 'Muistsete linnuste uurimise tulemustest Eesti NSV-s', in *Muistsete asulad ja linnused* (Tallinn, 1955), pp. 46–87 (here 78–81); Arvi Haak, 'Society and Change: The Case of Northern Viljandimaa (South Estonia) during Europeanisation', in *Offa. Berichte und Mitteilungen zur Urgeschichte, Frühgeschichte und Mittelalterarchäologie*, vol. 58, 2001 (Neumünster, 2003), pp. 229–35 (here 230).

²⁶ HCL XXVII.2, p. 195; Brundage, p. 215.

²⁷ Heiki Valk, 'Archaeological Investigations in Late Prehistoric–Early Medieval Viljandi and in Pilistvere Churchyard', in *Archaeological Fieldwork in Estonia 1999* (Tallinn, 2000), pp. 39–53; Heiki Valk, 'Siege Constructions from 1223 in Viljandi', in *Archaeological Fieldwork in Estonia 2000* (Tallinn, 2001), pp. 65–79; Anu Vaba and Heiki Valk, 'Prehistoric Settlements in Viljandi: New Evidence', in *Archaeological Fieldwork in Estonia 2001* (Tallinn, 2002), pp. 82–90; Heiki Valk, 'Excavations in Viljandi: New Data about the Final Period of Iron Age and the



Map 12.2 The besieging constructions from 1223 south of Fellin stronghold
 Key: A–E – man-made hills – locations of trebuchets.

and stones. The hills were made on the flat bank of the lake valley – at the same level as the plateau of the besieged fort. Remains of at least four such man-made hills, located in close proximity to each other (Map 12.2), have been discovered in this part of the castle park, where the landscape has not been completely altered by medieval fortification works or by the creation of the park in the eighteenth

Siege of 1223', in *Archaeological Fieldwork in Estonia 2002* (Tallinn, 2003), pp. 56–70; Riina Rammo, Heiki Valk and Martti Veldi, 'Archaeological Investigation at the Siege Constructions on Viljandi Musumägi', in *Archaeological Fieldwork in Estonia 2003* (Tallinn, 2004), pp. 96–106; Riina Rammo and Martti Veldi, 'Archaeological Excavations at Musumägi Hill in Viljandi', in *Archaeological Fieldwork in Estonia 2004* (Tallinn, 2005), pp. 103–16; Heiki Valk, 'New Data about the Besieging Constructions from 1223 in Viljandi', in *Archaeological Fieldwork in Estonia 2005* (Tallinn, 2006), pp. 119–26; Riina Juurik, Anti Lillak, Ester Oras and Heiki Valk, 'Archaeological Excavations on the Ski-Jumping Hill in Viljandi', in *Archaeological Fieldwork in Estonia 2006* (Tallinn, 2007), pp. 103–10; Maria Smirnova, Eve Rannamäe, Raido Roog and Heiki Valk, 'New Archaeological Data from the Ski-Jumping Hill in Viljandi', in *Archaeological Fieldwork in Estonia 2007* (Tallinn, 2008), pp. 59–64.

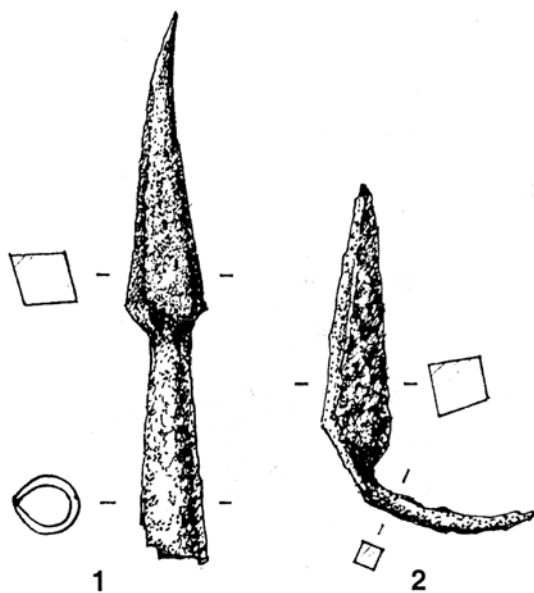


Figure 12.1 Crossbow bolts from 1223 from Fellin

Source: Photograph by Heiki Valk, 2009 © Heiki Valk

and nineteenth centuries.²⁸ Their number was originally much greater: most of the structures there were evidently destroyed because of the reasons mentioned above. It must be noted that much heaped-up soil was, in fact, removed cultural layer from settlement dating from the eleventh to early thirteenth centuries.

Henry's note about using trebuchets against the fort enables us to interpret the man-made hillocks as remnants of platforms for siege machines – made with the aim of raising the trebuchets above the level of the hillfort plateau to give them a better position for casting the stones. The distance of 110 to 140 metres is suitable for trebuchets, while at the same time being within the extreme outer zone of the range of crossbows: at a distance where taking aim is already impossible.²⁹ Impressive constructions of trebuchet platforms supported by massive posts can also be imagined on the basis of big post holes wedged with stones. These constructions evidently come from the siege of 1223 as, according to Henry, the siege of 1211 occurred in winter, when earthworks were impossible due to the frozen ground.

²⁸ Valk, 'Archaeological Investigations in Late Prehistoric', Figures 1, 2; Valk, 'Siege Constructions', Figure 17.

²⁹ Oral data from Ain Mäesalu.



Figure 12.2 A besieger's spade from 1223 from Fellin

Source: Photograph by Heiki Valk, 2001 © Heiki Valk

The fact that one of the hills yielded 41 crossbow bolts from an area of approximately 100 square metres (Figure 12.1),³⁰ and that the bolts were found at very different depths – from the surface down to intact ground – gives evidence of construction works that were seriously hindered by falling arrows. The rushing of the works is also shown by the fact that the cultural layer contained an iron edging of a timber spade – a tool used by the workers who carried soil to heap up the hills (Figure 12.2). The finds and findings correlate closely with Henry's note about the siege of 1223, that the besiegers with trebuchets were greatly hindered by Estonian crossbow men.

Another detail that matches Henry's description is a layer of washed sand under the soil brought up the hill for the trebuchet platform. Such layers of washed soil can occur as a result of large thunderstorms. In the Estonian climate, August is the period of thunder and intensive rain showers.

The low number of bolts (only two, both from the surface) on the adjacent hill immediately west of its above-mentioned neighbour raises the question of

³⁰ Valk, 'Archaeological Investigations in Late Prehistoric', pp. 46–7; Valk, 'Siege Constructions', pp. 67–8, Figure 14.



Figure 12.3 Profile brick from Fellin from before 1223, probably from the church mentioned by Henry of Livonia

Source: Photograph by Heiki Valk 2001 © Heiki Valk

why the builders of that hill were not hindered by the Estonians. Perhaps soil was carried here at night, in darkness? Or by prisoners of war, that is, imprisoned Estonians from the surroundings? Or was the hill made earlier than the others – even before the siege – for example, for some ritual purpose?

Archaeology has provided evidence of the large amount of work that was done to prepare places for the trebuchets: the transporting of great quantities of soil, sand and stones – the latter, probably, to fix the timber constructions (or just branches or bushes), in order to prevent soil from falling due to the vibration caused by the machines. In addition to granite stones, blocks of spring lime from the slope of the lake valley were also used as construction material. The findings offer evidence of the different ‘handwriting’ of the teams that constructed the trebuchet platforms.

Archaeology has also added other new information about the siege and the events that preceded it. Some brick fragments, including a profile brick which had been broken out of a wall (Figure 12.3), were found in the cultural layer of the settlement from the twelfth to early thirteenth centuries, which was used as building material for the trebuchet platforms. In addition to the crossbow bolts, brick fragments also make it possible to date the construction of the

man-made hills to the period of the crusades, since the Estonians did not possess brick-making skills before the conquest. The profile brick most likely originates from the church in the castle mentioned by Henry in the context of the uprising of 1223,³¹ since the use of profile bricks in profane architecture in the context of a hillfort can be ruled out in the early colonial period. A brick broken out of the wall enables one to suggest that after the successful uprising, the first church in Fellin was demolished.

Archaeology also gives evidence that houses were located on the southernmost of the hills – the present-day ski-jump – and that they were burned in the course of crusade activities. Remains of at least two houses were found on that hill, one containing a crossbow bolt that fell between the charred logs inside the building.³² The bolt also demonstrates the local resistance to the crusaders, even from a tiny hill with steep slopes close to the main fort. Archaeology shows that the fill sand was carried by the besiegers and thrown upon the charred and still glowing logs. The immediate sequence of events is shown by traces of burning on sand that was in contact with the logs. It was the freshly added sand that preserved the charred logs from destruction.

The interpretation of the archaeological record presented here is largely based on Henry's description of the siege and his two important notes: that after the events of 1223 the fort of Fellin was heavily fortified and transformed by the Order into an order castle,³³ and that the besieged Estonians used crossbows and trebuchets against the besiegers' trebuchets (see above). If these pieces of information were absent, it would be difficult to explain the finds and findings.

Case 3. Raid on Harria in Early 1224

It should be noted that while a number of events described in Henry's chronicle can be considered true, or possibly true, according to the archaeological evidence, there are, however, also places where Henry cannot be trusted (for example, the description of events in which he did not take part). As to the latter, we can give an example here concerning the last larger German campaign in Harria, namely against the stronghold at Lohu (*castrum Lone*) in early 1224, in the light of recent archaeological excavations in this area, particularly at the neighbouring Keava hillfort.

³¹ HCL XXVI.5, p. 189.

³² Valk, 'Archaeological Investigations in Late Prehistoric,' pp. 41–3; Valk, 'Excavations in Viljandi,' pp. 61–4.

³³ HCL XXVIII.9, p. 206: 'Fratres autem militia abierunt in Saccalem et castrum Viliende possidentes, firmissime illud edificare ceperunt.'

The initial plan of this campaign was to go against Dorpat, but then the Rigans recalled – as Henry wrote:

the Danes who were in continuous troubles and against whom all the adjacent lands and pagan tribes had been fighting for a long time; and they gave up their journey to Dorpat and went with all their army into Harria and besieged the *castrum Lone*, fighting with them for two weeks, building machines and trebuchets and a very strong wooden tower, which they pushed up near the fort, so that they could dig at the fort from below and better attack them from above.³⁴

The defenders surrendered when the digging of the fort seemed to reach its goal and the rampart was about to tumble down. According to Henry, the besiegers seized all the plunder, ‘gave the men back to the Danes and sent them back to their villages as free people’, while the stronghold was set on fire. But ‘the Germans, meanwhile, sent some men from their army to three other lesser forts lying round about, and threatened war upon them unless they surrendered. These three adjacent forts surrendered to the Rigans, sending them tribute and a great many “*waipas*” (carpets) in the same campaign.’³⁵

This section of the chronicle, describing the two-week siege at Lohu and the take-over of three other smaller forts in the vicinity, raises several questions. Based on the text, Henry did not, unlike two previous raids on Harria in 1216 and 1220, participate in the campaign, and thus did not witness the events. The first matter of interest is the sudden change of plan: the decision to help the Danes, their old rivals, instead of attacking Dorpat, which was under the direct influence of Riga. Another curious aspect is the attack on the stronghold of Lohu, where the crusaders’ army had peacefully camped at least twice in earlier times (although the fort is only now mentioned by name for the first time). The reasons for choosing the fort of Lohu instead of Dorpat as a target are unclear. One may, however, presume that the inhabitants of Lohu were those who besieged Reval together with the people from Warbola two years earlier, or who by repeated raids forced their neighbours in Jerwia (Est. Järvamaa, Ger. Jerwen) to replace their German lords with Danish ones. In the former case, the joy of the Danes over the Germans’ help, as mentioned by Henry,³⁶ could be easily understood, while in the latter case it remains entirely incomprehensible.

The chronicle recounts that the slope of the stronghold was dug down during the two-week siege so that the fort’s rampart was in real danger of collapsing.

³⁴ HCL XXVII.6, p. 198; Brundage, pp. 218–19. Henry’s *castrum Lone* has been identified with Lohu hillfort.

³⁵ HCL XXVII.6, p. 198–9; Brundage, p. 219.

³⁶ HCL XXVII.6, p. 198.



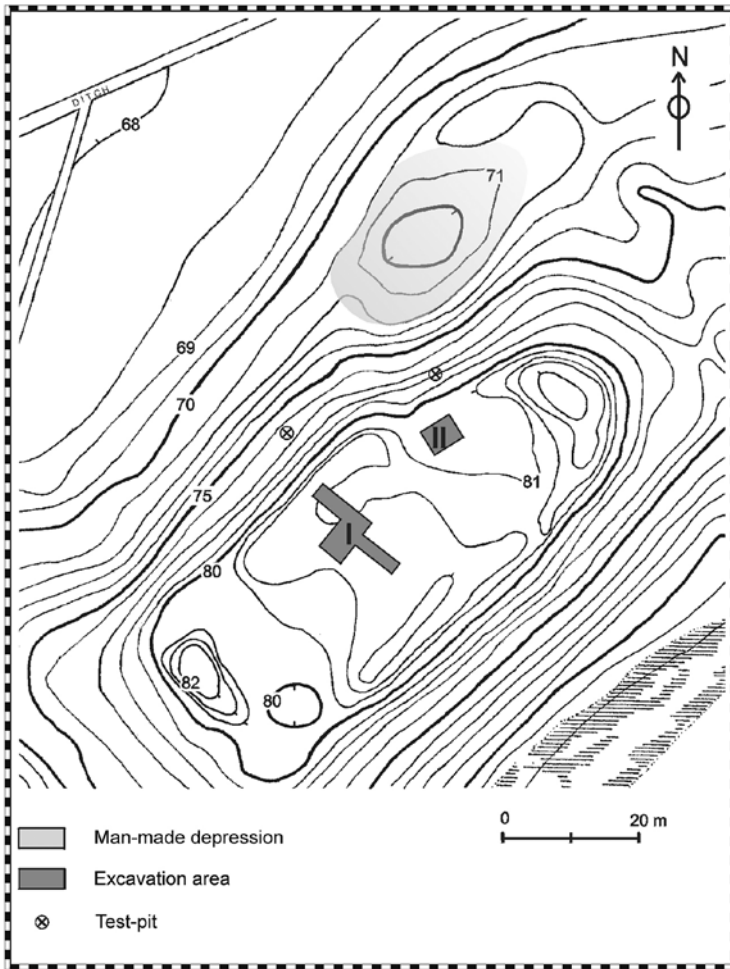
Figure 12.4 The stronghold at Lohu

Source: Photograph by Ants Kraut © National Heritage Board, Tallinn

However, no traces of such digging can be observed at the fort of Lohu (Figure 12.4). It is true that one of the fort's sides, which seems to lack a rampart, has been considered to have sunk into the river. If this sinking occurred as a result of the digging of the hill's slope from below, one must assume that the besiegers' 'very strong tower' was built on the river's ice cover. It is highly questionable whether the ice was capable of bearing such a load, and whether the besiegers were willing to take that risk. Moreover, the discussed side of the hill looks very even and untouched, and it is reasonable to think that this steep slope, defended by the presence of river, never had any earthwork (at least not as high as on the other sides) erected on it.

A completely different situation can be found at Keava, which is located 23 kilometres south of Lohu, where a hollow in the hill's slope is visible even today (Map 12.3), and where archaeological excavations have proven that the rampart had really been torn down.³⁷ The chronicler does not write about the siege of

³⁷ Valter Lang, Margot Laneman, Helena Kaldre, Marge Konsa and Andres Tvauri, 'From the Early Pre-Roman Iron Age to the Early Modern Times: New Investigations at Keava', in *Archaeological Fieldwork in Estonia 2004* (Tallinn, 2005), pp. 45–58.



Map 12.3 Hillfort at Keava

Keava, although he mentions disturbing and threatening three smaller forts in the district until their surrender. This, however, must be considered nothing more than a muddle, because archaeological investigations have not identified other forts of the time in Harria other than those in Warbola, Lohu and Keava. The conquering and burning down of three forts has also been mentioned by Henry in conjunction with the first campaign against Sontagana³⁸ – despite the

³⁸ HCL XIV.10, p. 82; see also Sulev Vahtre, *Muinasaja loojang Eestis. Vabadusvõitlus 1208–1227* (Tallinn, 1990), p. 63.

fact that there were no other forts besides the one at Sontagana, which remained unconquered at that time. The overall impression is that the events of 1224 described by Henry occurred at Keava rather than at Lohu; Henry may have placed these events at Lohu because this was a name and place he knew well in Harria – unlike Keava, which was probably an unknown or forgotten name. Also, the hillfort of Keava was the first one encountered when approaching from the south – if the crusaders really came from that direction, as has usually been suggested (see case 4 and Map 12.4 below).

Reading Concealed Text and the Reconstruction of History

No chronicle is a systematic and full overview of historical events. Instead, each chronicle reflects the author's knowledge and choices. In addition to thoroughly described events, details and processes, much remains concealed or neglected in the text. The general context of the chronicle, however, provides hints about the 'missing' information: the text raises definite questions that serve as a source for the interpretation of the archaeological record. Thus the series of events mentioned in the chronicle may encourage archaeologists to interpret the archaeological record with a definite aim: to fill in the blanks in Henry's story and reconstruct that which is missing or only indirectly hinted at in the chronicle. The first stage in filling in blanks is, however, to find them and ask questions.

One question that is essential for different reasons – those concerning territorial, administrative, social and power structures, as well as military topics – is Henry's treatment of sieges of strongholds (see Map 12.1). Without going into detail here, we would just like to address one interesting question: why are so few – only twelve – strongholds said to have been involved in the battles? Were about twice as many of them really left untouched? If so, why? Of course, as we saw above, some smaller forts may not have been named, and Henry does not give any detailed accounts of the activities of the Danes, but the low number of mentioned sieges is still a topic for discussion. It has been emphasized quite often in Estonian historical research that the so-called 'ancient fight for freedom'³⁹ was first and foremost a war for the strongholds, as the capture of a fort also meant the surrender of the entire district around it. Nevertheless, a glance at the map clearly shows that this could not be the whole story. Why are so few strongholds said to have been captured, and why exactly these particular

³⁹ In the 1920s, this term was introduced in Estonia for the crusades, drawing on historical parallels with Estonia's recent War of Independence (1918–20). See Chapter 17 by Linda Kaljundi (in collaboration with Kaspars Kļaviņš) in this volume.

sites (and some of them several times, even)? This is a question that needs to be studied in greater detail.

In some cases, however, the questions about the gaps in Henry's account can be answered. Hypothetical answers to these questions are the only ones possible, considering the present state of research, but this is still a positive alternative to Henry's silence.

Case 4: The Fall of the Uprising of 1223–24 in Ugaunia

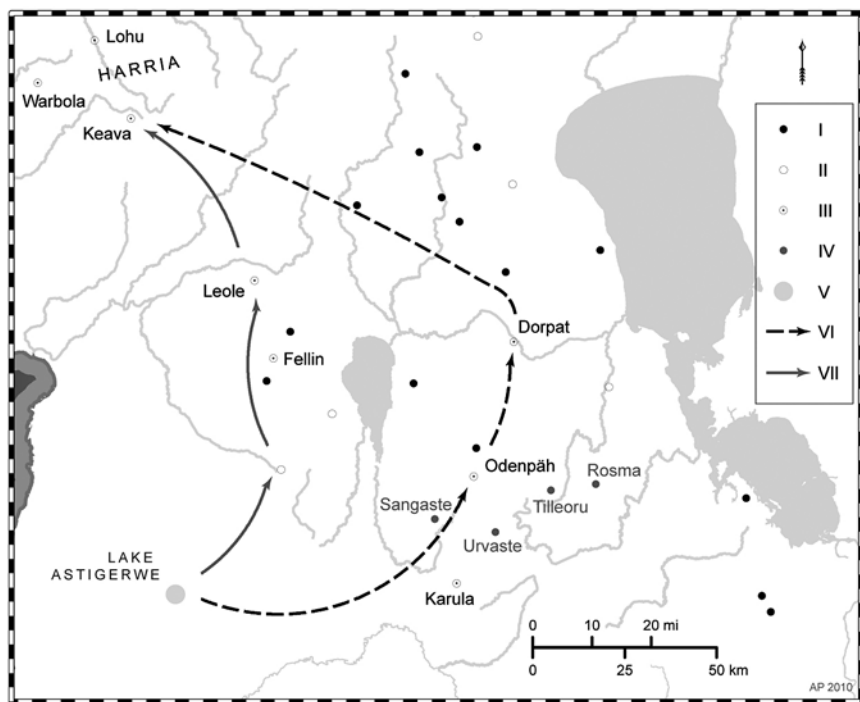
Henry's information about the suppression of the great uprising of the Estonians in 1222–24 is scanty, being limited to detailed descriptions of the sieges of Fellin (1–15 August 1223) and Dorpat (15–? August 1224). These events were undoubtedly the crucial points which marked the end of the uprising in the provinces of Saccala (Est. Sakala) and Ugaunia (Est. Ugandi), respectively. Evidence for the events of the uprising in other parts of south-eastern Estonia are, however, almost completely absent, being limited to general information about a request for aid from the Russians, the arrival of Russian garrisons in the strongholds, including Dorpat and Odenpäh, and repeated mutual military raids.⁴⁰ Henry tells us nothing about the way Odenpäh, one of the two main centres of Ugaunia, accepted the supremacy of the crusaders once again. We know only that by spring 1224, the time of the return of bishops Albert of Riga (r. 1199–1229) and Hermann of Dorpat (r. 1224–47) and the crusaders from Germany, all of Estonia, except for the hillfort of Dorpat, had been regained, and that Bishop Hermann travelled from Riga to Odenpäh.⁴¹ We know that once Dorpat remained the only stronghold of the rebellious Estonians, 'all who had done evil things from the adjacent provinces' (*omnes malefici de provinciis vicinis*) gathered there.⁴² Among them were probably also those Estonians from Odenpäh who had still remained resistant. The lack of information about the re-conquest of rebellious lands – a key point for the future of the country – makes us even doubt Henry's presence in Livonia in the winter of 1223–24: maybe he left it together with the crusaders in the autumn, returning only in spring. The archaeological record helps us find some information about this 'gap' in Henry's story.

In south-eastern Estonia there are three strongholds which might, judging by the size of their plateau and the strength of their fortifications, date from the final period of the Iron Age: Rosma, Tilleoru and Sangaste (Map 12.4:

⁴⁰ HCL XXVI.8–13; XXVII.1, pp. 191–5.

⁴¹ HCL XXVIII.1–2, pp. 199–201.

⁴² HCL XXVIII.3, p. 201; Brundage, p. 221.



Map 12.4 The crusaders' raid on Harria in 1224

Key: I – forts; II – presumed forts; III – forts actively involved in military activities; IV – forts, presumably constructed or re-fortified in 1223; V – troop assembling site at Lake Astigerwe; VI – suggested route of the crusaders' army; VII – traditional treatment of the route of the crusaders' army.

IV).⁴³ The unlevelled yards of these forts, with heaps of added and unused material on Tilleoru and a small old gravel pit on top of Sangaste hillfort, enable us to suggest that fortification works remained unfinished there. The

⁴³ 'Eesti muinaslinnade kataloog', in Tõnisson, *Eesti muinaslinnad*, pp. 310–12; 314–16; 317–19. It is possible that the hill fort of Märdi (11 km SSW of Odenpäh), where in the excavations of 2011 (conducted by Heiki Valk) a fallen burnt defence wall was discovered, also belongs to the group of short-time forts of the crusade period. The Carbon-14 analyses have yet to be made. The total lack of artefact finds, although the soil was totally sieved, indicates most short-time use of the fort. A crossbow bolt found in the excavations of 2011 from the hillfort Aakre Kivivare (15 km west of Odenpäh) where all other finds are from the Viking Age shows that also this hillfort, although not inhabited in the early thirteenth century, was involved in some crusade period war activities.

stronghold of Urvaste might also belong to the same period. Between 2006 and 2008 these sites were studied with trial excavations in order to establish their chronology.

Rosma hillfort can be dated to the final period of the Late Iron Age due to its 350-metre long rampart around an oval plateau.⁴⁴ The huge depression of a former well points to the fort's use in the thirteenth century, since the practice of long-lasting sieges was only initiated in Estonia in the period of the crusades. The two ¹⁴C samples from the burnt timber fortifications of Rosma hillfort, evidently remains of the same construction, yielded different dates: AD 995–1216 and AD 1255–1309 (both calibrated; precision 95.4 per cent).⁴⁵ The last date must, however, be doubted as unexpectedly late: until now there are no other firm data about the post-conquest use of Estonian hillforts in Ugaunia and Saccala,⁴⁶ the lands where the Germans who lived together with the neophytes in the strongholds were murdered in a treacherous way in early 1223.⁴⁷ This fact makes it possible to suggest that the old elite of the lands of Ugaunia and Saccala were excluded from the new power structures and denied the status of vassals, as a rule. Thus it seems more likely that the fort originates from the period of the crusades than from the late thirteenth century.

⁴⁴ Heiki Valk, 'Excavations on the Hillforts of South-Eastern Estonia: Luhtõ, Sangaste and Rosma', in *Archaeological Fieldwork in Estonia 2007* (Tallinn, 2008), pp. 43–58 (here 53–5).

⁴⁵ Ta-2902; Tln3154.

⁴⁶ The post-conquest dates from Sangaste and Erumäe cannot be regarded as reliable. The ¹⁴C date of one sample from Sangaste (see data presented on p. 309 below) also includes a possible post-conquest time-span, but it is in contradiction with all of the other three samples, one of them from exactly the same context, that is, from charcoal particles from the original soil under the raised edge of the plateau. In Erumäe, three of the eight samples taken in 1982 also include the possibility of the post-conquest period (2 x 1159–1278 AD; 1162–1284 AD) ('Eesti muinaslinnade kataloog', in Tõnisson, *Eesti muinaslinnad*, pp. 298–9), but the excavation results in two plots (1982 and 2008 plot no. 2) clearly show that the rampart was built in one stage. Five other samples from the same series, and the recent ¹⁴C date from the fallen rampart constructions (Tln3157: 881–1157; calibrated, 95.4 per cent precision), also indicate to the Late Iron Age. The overlapping part of all eight samples indicates to the early 1160s. The twelfth and thirteenth centuries are quite a 'difficult' period for calibrated radiocarbon dates, due to the frequent fluctuations of the ¹⁴C-isotope in the atmosphere at that time.

⁴⁷ HCL XXVI.5–7, pp. 189–90.

Excavations in Tilleoru in 2005⁴⁸ and 2008⁴⁹ gave no information about the date of the construction of the last stage of the mighty sand rampart, which currently has a present height of approximately 3.5 metres on the inner side and approximately 4 metres on the outer side (measured from the present-day bottom of the wide and shallow moat).⁵⁰ However, when cutting the central part of the rampart by excavation trench, no remains of burnt timber fortifications that could belong to its latest stage were found. The situation at Tilleoru differs considerably from that at other excavated south Estonian hillforts with similar sand ramparts: the latter have collapsed and fallen when the timber constructions have perished in fire. Such, for example, is the situation at Lõhavere, Erumäe and Rosma. At these sites, the remains of burnt timber fortifications were preserved under the sand that had fallen from the collapsing rampart. It seems likely that at Tilleoru timber fortifications were not erected at the top of the rampart at all.

The date when the rampart at Urvaste stronghold (Map 12.4: IV) was constructed is also unclear. Although excavations of the site⁵¹ yielded no information about when the rampart was established, its 'late origin' can be suggested by its relative height – up to 3.5–4 metres from the bottom of the moat. The large size of the plateau, approximately 2,800 square metres, also enables us to suppose it belonged to the final stage of the Iron Age. As at Tilleoru, at Urvaste no traces of burning were found from the surface of the rampart. This fact also indicates the possibility that construction of this fort remained unfinished.

The most informative results were obtained at the hillfort of Sangaste, located 17 kilometres south-west of Odenpäh as the crow flies and surrounded by a rampart on the slope at two thirds of its height. Two excavation plots at the edge of the hill plateau showed that its edges had been raised by between 1.2 and 2.25 metres. Sizeable earthworks point to a large number of participants and to well-organized works. Calibrated ¹⁴C-dates that indicate date ranges of timber (with 95.4 per cent probability) refer to possible construction work at the time of the

⁴⁸ Heiki Valk, 'Excavations in the Late Iron Age and Medieval Centres of Võrumaa: Tilleoru, Kirumpää and Vastseliina', in *Archaeological Fieldwork in Estonia 2005* (Tallinn, 2006), pp. 127–40 (here 127–30).

⁴⁹ Heiki Valk, Riina Juurik, Eve Rannamäe, 'New Excavations on the Hillforts of South-eastern Estonia: Varest, Erumäe and Tilleoru', in *Archaeological Fieldwork in Estonia 2008* (Tallinn, 2009), pp. 82–95 (here 89–92).

⁵⁰ The latest stage of the rampart covered an earlier and much smaller rampart, upon which burning layers from the Viking Age or earlier period were found. Excavation finds from the fort plateau point to the end of the formation of the cultural layer in the first half of the eleventh century.

⁵¹ Heiki Valk, 'Excavations in the Ruins of Vastseliina Castle and on the Hillforts of Urvaste and Hinniala', in *Archaeological Fieldwork in Estonia 2006* (Tallinn, 2007), pp. 49–67 (here 62–5).

crusades. Thus a sample from the inside of the rampart indicates a time-span between the years 1023 and 1221.⁵² Charcoal particles from above intact natural soil, probably results of burning cut bushes and branches when preparing the hill to make the fort, gave contradictory results: 1) AD 1019–1193 or 1195–1213, and 2) 1222–1325 or 1344–94.⁵³ A sample taken from under the turf from the top of the raised plateau at the edge of the hill yielded a possible time-span of AD 1131–33 or 1159–1279. In discussing these data we must consider that samples originating from the inside of the log do not indicate the date when the tree was cut down, but an earlier time. A more firm basis for dating was, however, offered by thirteenth-century potsherds⁵⁴ from the cultural layer on the raised edge of the hill plateau. These finds seem to rule out the period before the crusades. Similar pottery ornamented with V-shaped images in a horizontal line has been obtained in the excavations at Pikk Street in Fellin in 1991 – from the layers which can be dated to the middle of the thirteenth century.⁵⁵

Thus, archaeology indicates the construction of a fort: burning the bushes and branches of trees that had been cut from the hill, forming its slopes and building a rampart there, as well as raising the edge of the hill plateau. There were probably also plans to level the yard and build another rampart at its edge, as was typical of Estonian strongholds of post-Viking Age times, but traces of actual works of this sort were not discovered.

The heaps of fire-cracked stones (Figure 12.5) which were found in both excavation plots close to the edge of the hill plateau are worthy of special note. Although cracked by fire, the heaps did not contain any charcoal particles. We can presume that the burnt stones were brought to the edge of the hill from somewhere, to be used as ‘ammunition’, that is, for casting. The fact that the heaps consisted of burnt stones refers to the season when ordinary stones were not available – that is, winter. The stones that were brought to the edge of the unfinished hillfort in order to protect it might have been taken from the stoves of houses that were destroyed by fire during the plundering raids of crusade-period wars. The use of ‘worn-out’ stones from stoves cannot be ruled out either: in the Finnic ethnographic tradition, such stones were collected and preserved in definite heaps close to buildings.⁵⁶ Thus archaeology characterizes Sangaste as an unfinished fort that was probably prepared for defence once during the thirteenth-century crusades.

⁵² Ibid., pp. 47–9.

⁵³ The date is: 700 ± 50 , cal 695 ± 60 BP (Ta 2904); published first only here.

⁵⁴ Valk, ‘Excavations on the Hillforts’, Figures 5: 1, 2.

⁵⁵ Heiki Valk, ‘About the Role of the German Castle at the Town-Genesis Process in Estonia: The Example of Viljandi’, in *Castella Maris Baltici*, vol. 1, ed. Knut Drake (Stockholm, 1993), pp. 219–23 (here 222, Figure 4).

⁵⁶ Valk, ‘Excavations on the Hillforts’, pp. 50–51.



Figure 12.5 Heap of fire-cracked stones at the edge of Sangaste hillfort plateau – probably ‘ammunition’ against a crusaders’ raid in early 1224

Source: Photograph by Heiki Valk 2007 © Heiki Valk

The picture becomes clearer when one considers data provided by Henry. Within the possible framework of 1208–24, the construction of new strongholds in south Estonia during the first period of fighting, 1208–12, as well as the following three years of armistice, is most unlikely: this was the time of military balance in which the society of the pre-crusade period still functioned in a traditional way. The period 1216–22, when Ugaunia was Christianized and power belonged to the crusaders, also seems to be an unlikely time to initiate the construction of new hillforts. Evidently German resources were concentrated on fortifying Odenpäh,⁵⁷ the crucial power centre of the region. When considering Henry’s data, the most suitable context for the construction of new forts in Ugaunia is the time of the uprising of 1223: now the country needed new, dispersed regional centres for defence – strong and large enough to offer shelter to large numbers of people and to resist sizeable groups of crusaders.

Preparing the hill for fortification and the burning of branches and bushes could only have taken place in Sangaste in the spring or summer of 1223 – in

⁵⁷ HCL XX.5, p. 137.

the season when land is not frozen and timber dries in the sun. Thus the last desperate attempt to defend the unfinished fort – the time when stone heaps were set at the edge of the hill plateau – evidently took place in the winter of 1223–24. However, the heaps of unused stones show that the siege and battle probably never occurred: evidently there was some agreement and surrender without a battle. This is also shown by the unused ‘ammunition’ stored at the edge of the hill plateau.

In 2010 the hillfort of Karula (Rebäsemõisa) (Map 12.4: III) was added to the map of Estonian forts besieged during the crusades.⁵⁸ Two crossbow bolts of the crusade period were discovered at this fort, where previously most of the finds have been of items dating from the first millennium AD. The fact that wheel-thrown pottery was almost totally absent from the finds shows that the site was not inhabited during the last centuries of prehistory. It also seems that this fort was only re-constructed during the crusades and was in use then only for a very short time. The fortifications of Karula have the same ‘handwriting’ as in Sangaste. In both cases the whole perimeter of the hill has been fortified on the slope, half-way to the top: in Sangaste by constructing a rampart there, in Karula by digging the slope steeper.

How does the archaeological evidence from Sangaste and Karula fit into the more detailed story of the big uprising of 1223–24, as told by Henry? According to Henry, the main event of the winter of the uprising was the crusaders’ raid on Harria in early 1224 (case 3). Henry tells us that after Christmas a large army of Rigans, Sword Brethren, Lettgallians and Livs met (*convenerunt*) at Lake Astigerwe (Latv. Burtineki) and, having abandoned the plan to raid Dorpat, went to Harria.⁵⁹ This raid has traditionally been regarded as a direct one – through Saccala (Map 12.4: VII). Sulev Vahtre has concluded that the decision to abandon the plan to besiege Dorpat was already made at Astigerwe.⁶⁰ In fact,

⁵⁸ Heiki Valk, Ingrid Ulst, Jüri Metssalu and Anti Lillak, ‘Excavations on the Hillforts of South-eastern Estonia: Nooska, Kaloga, Karula, Võuküla and Lääniste’, in *Archaeological Fieldwork in Estonia 2010* (in print). The excavations were conducted by Heiki Valk.

⁵⁹ See case 3 above and HCL XXVII.6, p. 198.

⁶⁰ Vahtre (*Muinasaja loojang Eestis*, p. 162) has expressed the opinion that the Rigenses’ initial plan to besiege Tartu was actually the Order’s and that it was blocked by the bishop, who was more interested in strengthening his positions in the north. He also suggests that if they had had a plan to go against Tartu, the crusaders’ army would have chosen another road and not passed Lake Astigerwe, which is not on the direct route from Riga to Ugaunia. Such an interpretation arises, however, from a misreading of Henry’s text: the chronicle does not recount the earlier gathered army’s raid via Astigerwe but about the meeting of its different units at the lake. For the gathering point of military units coming from different directions, and reaching the agreed appointment place, probably at different times, a camp site that had already been used (in 1208 – HCL XII.6, p. 65; early 1211 – HCL XIV.10, p. 82) seems highly

however, Henry does not say anything about the time at which changes to the initial plans were made. We can suggest that it was even more likely that the decision was made not at the lake but on the way to Dorpat or close to it. The large army probably moved first to Ugaunia (Map 12.4: VI), giving a reason for Odenpäh and Sangaste to surrender (as mentioned above, in the spring Bishop Hermann was already in Odenpäh). We can presume that there was no battle – at least Henry does not mention one – but power was handed over as a result of negotiations. We can presume that the size of the army was too big even for Odenpäh to resist, not to mention the smaller and unfinished hillfort of Sangaste. It is probable that the hillfort of Karula was also besieged and attacked during the same raid (or in the spring or summer of 1224), judging from the evidence of crossbow bolts found at the site.

The construction works at other unfinished forts – Rosma, Tilleoru and maybe also Urvaste and Märdi – might also belong to the same context, that of the uprising of 1223. Attempts to construct new strongholds – a process which began in the summer of 1223 in different parts of Ugaunia – were stopped because the arrival of a large and powerful army before the forts were ready was feared. The crucial decisions for surrender without any major besieging or battle were still made in Odenpäh, initiated by a realistic estimation of the balance of forces: probably Ugaunia had already lost most of its men in the preceding wars.

Contextual Reading of the Chronicle(s)

In addition to the analysis of individual events and the reconstruction of events or historical processes, archaeology can provide the facts and events described in the chronicle with a broader context. It can furnish them with a background that is also usually a subject of archaeological research, that is, prehistoric society, economy or culture. Within such an approach the messages of the chronicle about individual events and phenomena are taken as artefacts of the past, which for an archaeologist start to talk only after they are put into context. The study of the archaeological context concealed behind individual events and messages has until now been used to a lesser extent; nevertheless, every new reading of Henry's chronicle may also offer some new problems that are worthy of further examination. Below we offer an example of this.

suitable. Logistically, a good camping place seems more important for the gathering of a big army than one or two days' extra journey for some of its units. At the earlier used site, there may also have been some infrastructure to facilitate the encampment of a large army. It should also be noted here that the Astigerwe region was the location of a Lettgallian nobility family (HCL XXIII.9, p. 167); this may also have facilitated the accommodation and supply of the army.

Case 5. The Öselian Navy and Its Broader Context

In 1212, the Öselian navy, which consisted of 300 warships and many smaller vessels, was completely destroyed on the Livonian Aa River (Latv. Gauja, Est. Koiva) in northern Latvia.⁶¹ This number, 300, given by Henry, may or may not be correct; nevertheless, his claim that the Öselians lost all of the ships they had in this campaign seems trustworthy. Only three years later, in early 1215, the Öselians came back to attack Riga with their large navy.⁶² The number of ships is not given this time, but Henry says that the navy was large. Later in the same year, the Öselians and other coastal Estonians gathered a navy of 200 warships.⁶³

Unfortunately, we do not know the total number of ships that the Öselians may have had on the island of Ösel, for instance, in 1212, before the catastrophe on the Livonian Aa; and therefore we do not know whether or not it was the entire navy that was shipwrecked. It is calculated that there was a total of 3,000 ploughlands of agricultural land on the island of Ösel, which means perhaps approximately 3,000 farms, or slightly less: according to north Estonian settlement historical circumstances⁶⁴ this could mean only c. 2,300–2,400 farms or 20,000–25,000 people. From Henry's chronicle we also know that there were 30 men in each warship. If the number of farms was approximately 3,000 and the number of ships in the entire navy 300, then there was about one ship per ten farms and each farm had to give approximately three men for raiding. Whatever the exact numbers were, it seems that if the entire navy was not really lost on the Livonian Aa River in 1212, then at least the majority of it was. And it took no more than three years to rebuild it.

Based on these two historical facts given by Henry, one must consider the broader context beyond these events. What does it mean to build a ship or, actually, to build two or three hundred ships? Particularly after the lost battle, in which according to Henry's report, all chiefs and 2,000 men were killed. Herewith we have to analyse two aspects, the social network and economic capacity. The loss of chiefs did not cause the collapse of the social order and structures; new chiefs immediately took their place and began to lead the communities. This refers to a well-established social organization with clearly fixed positions for everyone. This, actually, is not surprising at all in the light of

⁶¹ HCL XV.3, pp. 89–91.

⁶² HCL XIX.2, pp. 123–4.

⁶³ HCL XIX.5, p. 129.

⁶⁴ Valter Lang, *Muistised, kronoloogia ja maaviiljelusliku asustuse kujunemine Loode-Eestis, eriti Pirita jõe alamjooksu piirkonnas* (Tallinn, 1996).

recent archaeological research into late prehistoric societies in Estonia and on the island of Ösel in particular.⁶⁵

The economic background is more complex but also more interesting to discuss. The building of hundreds of ships required – in addition to know-how available at every ship-building location – large amounts of dry wood, which was sawn into planks. The island of Ösel was not particularly rich in suitable forests; perhaps there was a need to transport wood from the mainland. The ships also needed quite a lot of iron (to make rivets and other details), but we have to consider that the recovery of lost weaponry also required large amounts of iron. Thanks to archaeological discoveries, we know that there was a large iron-producing centre in the north-western part of the island of Ösel, in the surroundings of Tuiu, Pelisoo and Tõrise. During the twelfth to fourteenth centuries this centre produced 1,500–2,000 tons of iron, which was quite enough for both the islanders' own needs and for export.⁶⁶

In addition to wood and iron, the hundreds of ships also needed large amounts of cloth for sails. The making of sails was a time-consuming and labour-intensive undertaking that required a large quantity of wool or flax and hard work. It is difficult to believe that the Öselians were able to produce these materials themselves and sew the sails in such a short time. Therefore one must assume that there was a large trading network connecting the Öselians and the mainland communities: the Öselians' goods may have consisted of iron and items plundered during their raids on Scandinavia (including slaves and women, as reported by Henry); in return the Öselians got, among other things, wood and textiles for their ships. Perhaps it is in this context that we should think about the Öselians' interests in the mainland, even in central Estonia (the famous battle at Carethen [Est. Kareda]⁶⁷ is only one example of such activities). The fact that large amounts of textiles were collected by at least some strongholds is revealed by one report by Henry about the campaign in early 1224 against Lohu fort, already cited above: '... [t]hese three neighbouring forts gave themselves up to the Rigans and sent them tribute and a great many *waipas* in that same expedition.'⁶⁸ The Estonian word *vaip(a)* means a piece of cloth, a carpet. One

⁶⁵ Lang, *Muistne Rävala*; Valter Lang, 'Vakus ja linnusepiirkond Eestis. Lisandeid muistse haldusstruktuuri uurimisele peamiselt Harjumaa näitel', in *Keskus – tagamaa – ääreala*, ed. Valter Lang (Tallinn and Tartu, 2002), pp. 125–68; Marika Mägi, *At the Crossroads of Space and Time: Graves, Changing Society and Ideology on Saaremaa (Ösel), 9th–13th centuries AD* (Tallinn, 2002). See also Chapter 13 by Marika Mägi in this volume.

⁶⁶ Jüri Peets, *The Power of Iron: Iron Production and Blacksmithy in Estonia and Neighbouring Areas in Prehistoric Period and the Middle Ages* (Tallinn, 2003), p. 135.

⁶⁷ See HCL XXIII.9, pp. 166–7.

⁶⁸ HCL XXVII.6, p. 198–9; Brundage, p. 219.

can presume that the production of textiles, particularly for the sails of ships belonging to the Öselians and other coastal Estonians, was organized through a large network that extended far into the mainland. The chiefs of the strongholds, which were the trading and manufacturing centres of that era, may have been the organizers of textile production; it is quite conceivable that textiles were one part of the taxes the commoners had to give to the chiefs. From the research into osteological material, we know that sheep were widely bred in northern and western Estonia,⁶⁹ and Henry also reports large flocks of sheep being robbed during German campaigns in Estonian counties.

To summarize, the two reports by Henry – one about the total destruction of the navy and the other about the navy being restored within three years – enable us to examine both the social organization and trading networks of the Öselians in the early thirteenth century. There is almost nothing in the archaeological record itself that could allow one to draw such conclusions, and neither can one do so solely on the basis of the chronicle; it is only by putting all of the pieces of information together that one can imagine the real historical context behind these two events. This context also enables one to understand several other details, both in the chronicle and in the archaeological evidence, which otherwise would remain odd or incomprehensible.

Conclusions

Both archaeological and written records have their advantages and disadvantages. Both are fragmentary, unilateral and require interpretation and a source-critical, contextual approach. The chronicle originates from a context that was more-or-less known to its author but remains unknown to the present-day reader. The archaeological record comes from a broader archaeological context, upon which light is also shed by the written data. The connections between archaeological and written sources are real and existing. The interpretation of both kinds of source material requires a complex approach, based on the use of both archaeological and historical research methods, as well as on mutual respect and collaboration between both disciplines. Archaeology can offer much with which to fill the gaps in Henry's story; in addition, the chronicle text and historical analysis are essential tools for the interpretation of the archaeological record. Thus, for the reconstruction of historical events and the society of the past, different and mutually complementary sources and research methods should be used.

⁶⁹ For example, Liina Maldre, 'Karjakasvatus Eestis', in *Eesti aastal 1200*, ed. Marika Mägi (Tallinn, 2003), pp. 163–72.

Chapter 13

Ösel and the Danish Kingdom: Revisiting Henry's Chronicle and the Archaeological Evidence

Marika Mägi

The earliest longer description of Estonia was written by a thirteenth-century chronicler, known as Henry of Livonia, and is extensively used by both historians and archaeologists.¹ Still, the chronicler only deals superficially with local society, his descriptions are inescapably influenced by biased ideas of his time and some events are depicted only partly, or completely ignored. One of the passages in the chronicle where the observant reader must suspect an incomplete or oblique treatment is the story of a short-term conquest of Ösel (Est. Saaremaa) by Danes in 1222.²

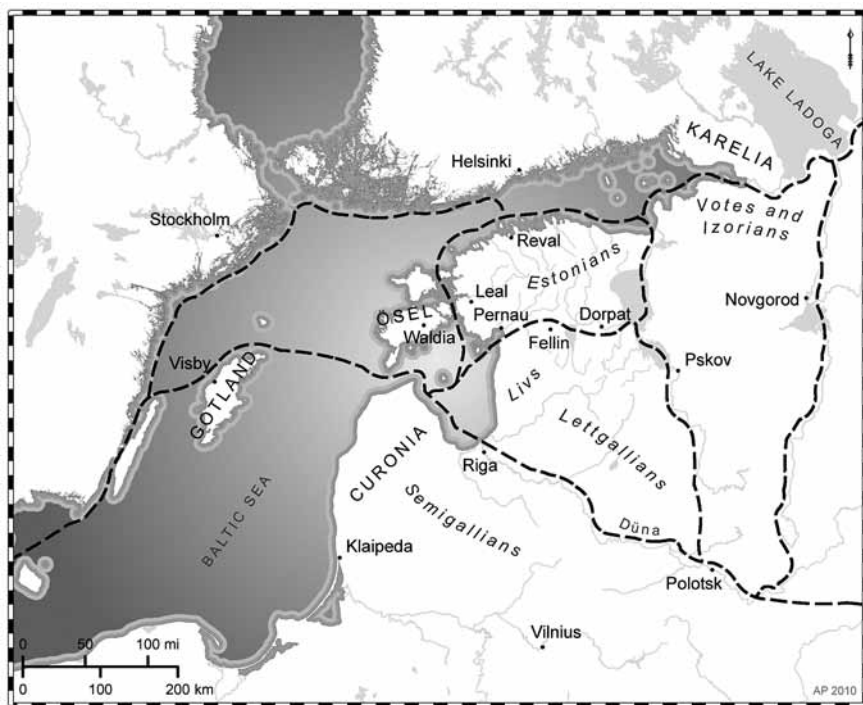
Since other written sources from thirteenth-century Estonia are rare, only archaeological evidence provides us with an alternative contemporary source for historical events at the time of Henry's narrative. This chapter tries to analyse how Henry's depiction of Ösel and the Öselians relates to the archaeological material from the twelfth- and thirteenth-century Estonian islands, and vice versa.

Peoples and Trade Routes of the Thirteenth-Century Baltic Sea

Although maritime activities have always played a prominent role in coastal areas around the Baltic Sea, some districts should be regarded as more active than others in this respect. Maritime orientation is above all dependent on topographic environment: island locations and long indented coasts naturally provide a good base for an active maritime culture. Particularly favourable is a position in the lower

¹ This article was written with the support of grant no. 6998 awarded by the Estonian Science Foundation. I am thankful to Tyge Andersen for his advice and inspiring remarks, and to Gordon Snow for editing the English version of the text.

² HCL XXVI.2, pp. 187–8.



Map 13.1 Trade routes to Byzantium and the East crossing thirteenth-century Livonia

reaches of large rivers, connecting potential trade markets, or at the crossroads of other essential trade routes. Maritime activity is also a great deal contingent upon political environment and can thus change with time: we have only to remember the decades after the Second World War when maritime activities on the eastern coasts of the Baltic were virtually non-existent. The situation has, however, been different in the course of most periods in history.

Supremacy in the early thirteenth-century Baltic Sea was held by the Danish king. The second half of the twelfth century had witnessed Denmark's subjugation of the coastal Wends, a Slavic ethnic group that was well known for its maritime activities on the south-west coast of the Baltic. The crusades against the Wends were carried out in cooperation with Saxony and Poland, and in the course of them several treaties were concluded with the local elite. Taking advantage of the lack of centralized political power, the crusaders were able to play off different districts against each other and subdue them one by one. Although the attacks against the Wends were initiated by crusading ideology, the incorporation of the coastal areas

into the Danish kingdom also eliminated the danger of the Wends attacking the coasts of Denmark.³ The safeguarding of Baltic trade routes, and consolidation of Danish control over them, can, however, be seen to have had even more beneficial results. Some of the international trade routes over the Baltic Sea had so far been controlled by the Wends, and the profit from them that had been paid into the coffers of local princes and magnates was probably considerable.⁴

The role played by the eastern coasts of the Baltic Sea was definitely no less essential for Baltic trade. It was here that profitable trade routes to Russia, Byzantium and other areas further east had their starting points. The most convenient water routes over the big Russian rivers and the watersheds between them started on the coasts of present-day Estonia and Latvia (Map 13.1). Along the northern coast of Estonia products could be transported to Old-Ladoga and Novgorod, and from there along several rivers to the Volga River and the Caspian Sea. One of the nodal points on this route was a trade centre at Iru, already established in the Bronze Age and succeeded by Reval (Est. Tallinn) in the Middle Ages.⁵ Another well-known trade route started along the River Düna (Latv. Daugava, Est. Väina, Russ. Dvina), and ran over several watersheds to the River Dnepr, Kiev and the Black Sea. A trade centre at Daugmale, the place where this route reached the Baltic Sea, was also established as early as in the Bronze Age, and was later replaced by medieval Riga.⁶ Although the River Düna has the greatest flow of water in the eastern Baltic, its navigation was complicated by numerous impassable rapids – in the early Middle Ages, there were more than 100 rapids in the territory of present Latvia alone.⁷

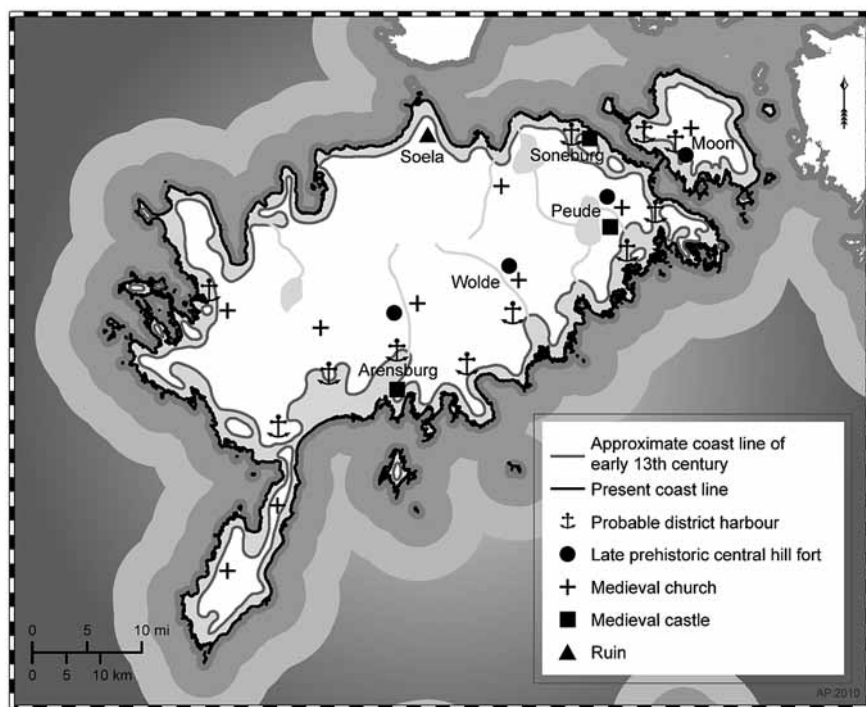
³ Kurt Villads Jensen, 'The Blue Baltic Border of Denmark in the High Middle Ages: Danes, Wends and Saxo Grammaticus', in *Medieval Frontiers: Concepts and Practices*, ed. David Abulafia and Nora Berend (Aldershot, 2002), pp. 173–93.

⁴ Eric Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades: The Baltic and the Catholic Frontier, 1100–1525*, 2nd edn (London, 1997), pp. 101–31; John H. Lind, Carsten Selch Jensen, Kurt Villads Jensen and Ane L. Bysted, *Danske korstog: Krig og mission i Østersøen* (Copenhagen, 2004), pp. 51–96.

⁵ Marika Mägi, 'Iru linnusest Püha Birgitta kloostriini. Merenduslik kultuurmaastik Piritä jõe alamjooksul', *Kunstiteaduslikke uurimusi* 4 (2007), 17–40.

⁶ See, for example, Arnis Rādiņš, 'Daugmale, Jersika, Riga: The Development of Economic and Political Centres Along the Lower Reaches of the Daugava', in *Lübeck Style? Novgorod Style? Baltic Rim Central Places as Arenas for Cultural Encounters and Urbanisation 1100–1400 AD*, ed. Muntis Auns (Riga, 2001), pp. 89–94; Guntis Zemītis, '10th–12th Century Daugmale. The Earliest Urban Settlement Along the Lower Daugava and Forerunner of Riga', in *Cultural Interaction Between East and West: Archaeology, Artefacts and Human Contacts in Northern Europe*, ed. Ulf Fransson et al. (Stockholm, 2007), pp. 279–84.

⁷ Arnis Rādiņš, 'Some Notes on the Daugava Way: The End of 12th–Beginning of 13th Century. Time of Changes on the Lower Daugava', in *Culture Clash or Compromise?*



Map 13.2 Ösel at the beginning of the thirteenth century

An alternative was offered by a route along the present-day Pärnu, Navesti, Tännasilma and Emajõgi Rivers, through the big lakes between Estonia and Russia to Pskov, and from there along the Velikaja River to Polotsk where it was united with the Düna route. Although in central Estonia this route today consists of smaller and non-navigable rivers, it is marked as one big river on nearly all medieval and early modern maps, and the route was mapped separately even as late as in the seventeenth century.⁸ However, the relevance of this trade route must have already disappeared during the medieval period.⁹ This route took

The Europeanisation of the Baltic Sea Area 1100–1400 AD, ed. Nils Blomkvist (Visby, 1998), pp. 178–91.

⁸ Ulla Ehrensverd, 'Topographica Estoniae. Handritade kartor och ritningar över Estland i svenska offentliga samlingar/Hand gezeichnete Karten und Zeichnungen von Estland in schwedischen öffentlichen Sammlungen', in *Eesti Teadusliku Seltsi Rootsis Aastaraamat XII, 1991–1999* (Stockholm, 2001), pp. 5–289 (here 64–5).

⁹ This could have been caused by changes in the west Estonian terrain, where land mass upheaval and the formation of swamps might have made the rivers in central Estonia difficult to pass with boats. A more essential reason can, however, be seen in the changing character

longer than sailing directly to Düna, but demanded less reloading of goods, thus making the transportation of them cheaper and less laborious. In late prehistory and the early Middle Ages many merchants apparently chose the Pärnu–Emajõgi River route instead of the River Düna: three of the four Estonian Hanseatic towns – Pernau (Est. Pärnu), Fellin (Est. Viljandi) and Dorpat (Est. Tartu) – were located along this waterway.¹⁰ The latter two were established as early as in the Viking Age, at the latest.¹¹

On the assumption that the majority of tradesmen coming from Western Europe to the eastern Baltic did not sail up to Stockholm along the eastern coast of Sweden, but turned east near Gotland, they had, one way or another, to pass the Estonian islands. The biggest of these islands is Ösel. In the thirteenth century, however, it consisted of several islands around one larger one, which have all grown together by now as the result of land mass upheaval. The second biggest of the islands, Dagö (Est. Hiiumaa) was sparsely inhabited, and its more densely populated south-eastern corner was probably considered together

of long-distance trade, which happened during the Middle Ages. International trade concentrated in bigger towns and in fewer well-established trade routes, and the quantity of products traded increased.

¹⁰ The author of this chapter considers the water route through Pernau, Fellin and Dorpat a vital aspect when evaluating the geopolitical situation in the thirteenth-century eastern Baltic. Not all Estonian archaeologists agree, however. In his monograph about prehistoric Dorpat, Andres Tauri has argued that trade, contrary to widespread opinion, played only a marginal role in the economy of late prehistoric Estonia. Tauri presented no evidence in support of this opinion, however, except for the fact that no scales or weights, and only one prehistoric coin, have been found in archaeological excavations of later medieval Dorpat. Accordingly, Tauri suggested that prehistoric Dorpat was not a trade centre, and the water route through the rivers of central Estonia never existed. He also argues that no Viking Age trade centre has been found on the site of later Pernau, and the upper classes of Novgorod were probably not interested in one more trade route through the area of present-day Estonia: Andres Tauri, *Muinas-Tartu* (Tartu and Tallinn, 2001), pp. 191–3, 208–12. Still, the emergence of trade routes cannot be defined only through ‘the interests’ of the towns in Kievan Rus, and the infertile soils around later Pernau speak against the possibility of a Late Iron Age trade centre there. Viking Age trade centres were as a rule not located right on the coast but at a distance from it, and the vicinity of fertile soils was essential for their location in pre-state periods: see Marika Mägi, “... Ships Are Their Main Strength”: Harbour Sites, Arable Lands and Chieftains on Saaremaa, *Estonian Journal of Archaeology* 8/2 (2004), 128–62. The strongest arguments in favour of the water route, like the formation of the cultural landscape, or the depiction of the water route on historical maps, have not drawn much of Tauri’s attention in his argumentation.

¹¹ Tauri, *Muinas-Tartu*, pp. 245–6; Arvi Haak, ‘Archaeological Investigations in the Late Iron Age Settlement Site of Huntaugu and at the Castle of Teutonic Order in Viljandi’, in *Archaeological Fieldwork in Estonia 2004*, ed. Ülle Tamla (Tallinn, 2005), pp. 89–101.

with Ösel. The name Ösel, in its early-thirteenth-century meaning, indicated the whole archipelago and not only the biggest island – which was also called Kuresaar (Kura or Curonian Island) up to the eighteenth century (Map 13.2).¹²

According to Henry of Livonia and other medieval authors, the Öselians, together with the inhabitants of Curonia (Ger. Kurland, Latv. Kurzeme), played a similar role in the maritime affairs of the eastern Baltic to that played by the Wends in the southern part of the sea. Of all the inhabitants of the eastern Baltic coast, they were the most vigorous. There is no doubt that the sea with all its attractions occupied a prominent place in the lives of Öselians. It meant first of all fishing and seal-hunting, as well as barter and presumably also sailing to trading places in remote countries. Recent research has pointed out a number of late prehistoric or medieval harbours along the coasts of Ösel as well. None of these, however, could correspond to that of a centre of international trade – and it is highly unlikely that such a place will be found in the future. Estonian islands are located close to the mainland, where medieval towns were founded right after the conquest. These centres took over the international trade, and the Öselian harbours became marginal.¹³

Thirteenth-century chronicles paint a picture of the Öselians as brutal barbarians, with all that this entails. Both Henry of Livonia and the anonymous author of the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* (c. 1290s) emphasized the supremacy of the Öselian navy, thus also indicating the fear of them felt by their neighbours and in later times by the crusaders. Both chroniclers considered it almost or completely impossible to attack Ösel in summer time. During the season of navigation, only the Danish navy ventured an attack on the Estonian islands.

The Öselians, often in cooperation with Curonians, carried out plundering raids on neighbouring areas, among others to the Danish and Swedish coasts.¹⁴ It is, however, difficult to believe that their supremacy at sea was based on plundering raids, let alone fishing. Vigorous military actions by Öselians on the neighbouring mainland, in both present-day Estonia and Latvia, suggest more likely ambitions to control international trade, particularly the three

¹² August Wilhelm Hupel, *Topographische Nachrichten von Lief- und Ebstland. Erster Band* (Riga, 1774), pp. 301–2; Ludwig August Mellin, *Atlas von Lief- und Ebstland oder von den beyden Gouvernemen-tern u. Herzogthümern Lief- und Ebstland und der Provinz Oesel* (Riga and Leipzig, 1798).

¹³ Mägi, '... Ships Are Their Main Strength'.

¹⁴ HCL VII.1, pp. 18–19; Brundage, p. 41; HCL XXX.1, pp. 215–16; Brundage, pp. 238–9; *Saxo Danmarks Historie*, trans. Peter Zeeberg (Copenhagen, 2000), pp. 748–53.

most essential routes that were described above. This is what interested the Danish king.¹⁵

Öselians in Henry's Chronicle of Livonia

Throughout his chronicle, Henry is antagonistic towards the Öselians, depicting them as the most malicious enemies of the Christians.¹⁶ In 1206, when Bishop Albert of Riga (r. 1199–1219) met Öselians on the sea, they ‘... had recently burned a church, killed some men and captured others, laid waste the land, and carried away the bells and belongings of the church, just as both the pagan Estonians and the Curonians had been accustomed to do heretofore in the kingdom of Denmark and Sweden.’¹⁷ Justifying the final attack on Ösel in 1227, the chronicler says: ‘The Öselians were accustomed to visit many hardships and villainies upon their captives, both the young women and virgins, at all times, by violating them and taking them as wives, each taking two or three or more of them. ... The Öselians were even accustomed to sell the women to the Curonians and other pagans.’¹⁸ In an even more detailed way, the Öselians’ brutalities were described in connection with the martyrdom of the priest Frederick and his companion in 1215:

... the Oeselians rushed upon him and captured him and his boy and some of the Livonians ... they there tortured him with various torments ... Afterwards the Oeselians sharpening hard, dry wood, inserted it between the nails and the flesh and tormented every member with the points. They set the wood afire and tortured them cruelly. At last they killed them by hacking with their axes between their shoulders.¹⁹

¹⁵ See also, for example, Artur Vassar and Enn Tarvel, ‘Die ostbaltischen Stämme im Kampf gegen die deutsch-skandinavische Aggression im 12.–13. Jahrhundert’, *Eesti NSV Teaduste Akadeemia Toimetised. Ühiskonnateadused* 1 (1975), 26–39 (here 36).

¹⁶ The version of HCL that is used nowadays turns clearly more hostile against the Öselians after the end of chapter 23. It is, however, possible that there were some later additions in the second part of the chronicle. An earlier manuscript of HCL, the so-called *Codex Zamoscianus*, was preserved only until chapter XXIII.8; the rest of the text currently used is based on a later transcription (Enn Tarvel, ‘Sissejuhatus’, in *Henriku Liivimaa Kroonika*, trans. Richard Kleis, ed. Enn Tarvel [Tallinn, 1982], pp. 5–21 [here 10–12]).

¹⁷ HCL VII.1, pp. 18–19; Brundage, p. 41.

¹⁸ HCL XXX.1, pp. 215–16; Brundage, p. 238.

¹⁹ HCL XVIII.8, pp. 121–2; Brundage, pp. 140–41.

Military actions by the Öselians are often described, whether they were simply looting raids conducted by them, or also attempts to arrange more coordinated hostilities together with other districts. There is evidence that Ösel itself was attacked only infrequently: by Danes in 1206 and 1222²⁰ and by Germans in 1216 and 1227,²¹ as well as a comment in the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* about Lithuanians ransacking the island in 1218 or 1219.²² Most campaigns were conducted over the frozen sea in wintertime; only the Danes used their navy. Except for the campaign in 1227, all other assaults ended without any political changes.

The assaults by Öselians depicted by Henry of Livonia can be divided into two categories: looting raids and organized hostilities. The first are often used as convenient examples of the brutality of pagans. Thus Öselians, presumably some smaller ransacking band, are reported to have tortured and killed a priest and captured some Livs in the estuary of the River Düna in 1215,²³ as well as having stolen cattle and killed a hermit in the same area in 1219.²⁴ The chronicler also describes larger-scale plundering raids. In 1203 Öselians – with 16 ships, according to Henry – looted Danish districts in Blekinge, and were later defeated by Germans in Visby.²⁵ Öselians pillaged in present-day northern Latvia in 1218,²⁶ and in the Jerwia (Ger. Jerwen, Est. Järvamaa) in northern central Estonia in 1220.²⁷ In 1226 they again plundered somewhere in Sweden.²⁸ Henry also mentions the Öselians in connection with the siege of Odenpäh (Est. Otepää) in 1216, which was initiated by Russians and resulted in a peace treaty between the Russians and Germans. This information may perhaps refer to a group of Öselian warriors in the service of the prince of Pskov. Although Öselians were mentioned, their role in the whole campaign seems not to have been very active and certainly not sovereign.²⁹

The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia also reveals several coordinated campaigns that were initiated by the Öselians. The activity of arranging such assaults was, in earlier Estonian national history writing, often attributed to other objectives:

²⁰ HCL X.13, pp. 43–4; XXVI.2, 3, pp. 187–8.

²¹ HCL XIX.9, pp. 133–4; XXX.3–5, pp. 216–21.

²² *Livländische Reimchronik mit Anmerkungen, Namensverzeichnis und Glossar*, ed. Leo Meyer (Paderborn, 1876), lines 1434–48.

²³ HCL XVIII.8, pp. 121–2.

²⁴ HCL XXII.8, p. 152.

²⁵ HCL VII.1–2, pp. 18–20.

²⁶ HCL XXI.5, 7, pp. 144–6.

²⁷ HCL XXIII.9, pp. 164–7.

²⁸ HCL XXX.1, pp. 215–16.

²⁹ HCL XX.7, 8, pp. 139–40.

to support other Estonians in their fight against the conquerors, or to punish Estonians who had capitulated to the Germans or Danes.³⁰ Such ideas proceed from the concept of national unity that has incorrectly been projected back onto the circumstances of the thirteenth century. It is difficult to believe that the political ambitions of the medieval Öselians were so altruistic. Closer observation of the campaigns initiated by the Öselians reveals that they focused on certain regions, while several concerted attacks on Estonian mainland districts, especially those deeper inland, did not seem to have attracted the inhabitants of Ösel. The Öselians were also absent from the major battle of Fellin in 1217, where otherwise, at least according to Henry, the whole of Estonia had gathered.³¹

In the 1210s, the political ambitions of the Öselians were primarily connected to the mouth of the River Düna, where the town of Riga had been founded at the beginning of the century. Random smaller-size looting raids on the islands in the lower reaches of the river were mentioned above. They cannot be defined as organized hostilities, and the descriptions of them by Henry can be seen, in addition to providing opportunities to describe the brutality of pagans, as indications of the factual presence of Öselians in this area. Even as late as 1226, William of Modena (c. 1184–1251), who was waiting for a favourable wind in the debouchments of the Düna River, saw Öselians sailing back from Sweden with hostages and loot.³² The statement has been explained by the surmise that William was waiting for the wind at the cape of Domesnäs (Latv. Kolka), because how else could the Öselians be said to ‘turn back’? Nevertheless, the Öselians could have turned back not to Ösel but the market of Riga.

The presence of Öselians in the lower reaches of the River Düna even before the thirteenth century is archaeologically marked by several burials of Öselian women in Livish cemeteries at Laukskola and on the island of Dole.³³ The occurrence of Öselian graves in these cemeteries is not exceptional, but female burials have also been recorded which included jewellery characteristic of

³⁰ See, for example, Evald Blumfeldt, ‘Ajaluugu’, in *Eesti. Maateaduslik, majanduslik ja ajalooline kirjeldus, IV. Saaremaa*, ed. Artur Luha, Evald Blumfeldt and August Tammekann (Tartu, 1934), pp. 263–350 (here 270–77); Harri Moora, Erik Laid, Julius Mägist and Hans Kruus, *Eesti ajalugu I. Esiajalugu ja Muistne vabadusvõitlus* (Tartu, 1936), pp. 270–376; Enn Tarvel, ‘Piiskopi- ja orduaeg 1227–1572’, in *Saaremaa, 2. Ajalugu, majandus, kultuur* (Tallinn, 2007), pp. 77–142 (here 78–80).

³¹ HCL XXI.2–4, pp. 141–4.

³² HCL XXX.1, p. 215–16.

³³ Elvira Šnore, ‘Daugavas libiesi Doles sala’, *Arheologija un Etnografija* 18 (1996), 111–30; Marika Mägi, ‘On the Mutual Relationship Between Late Prehistoric Saaremaa and the Livs’, in *Rituals and Relations: Studies on the Society and Material Culture of the Baltic Finns*, ed. Sari Mäntylä (Helsinki, 2005), pp. 187–206; Anna Zariņa, *Salaspils Laukskolas kapulauks 10.–13. gadsimts* (Riga, 2006), pp. 353–400, esp. pp. 355, 363, 383.

several other surrounding areas: Semgallia (Ger. Semgallien, Latv. Zemgale), Curonia and mainland Estonia, for example. So great an ethnic diversity of female burials has not been found in any other prehistoric burial ground in the eastern Baltic. The general explanation for this phenomenon – that marrying women from neighbouring areas was particularly characteristic of Livish men – seems unconvincing. It is also worth taking into consideration the fact that male jewellery as well as weapons and other accessories of some eastern Baltic ethnic groups were very similar, if not identical. It is impossible to distinguish an Öselian man from a Livish one, relying only on evidence collected from graves.³⁴ It is therefore also impossible to define with certainty how many of the men buried in these cemeteries were non-Livish.³⁵ Taking into consideration several Öselian female graves in these cemeteries, it is possible to suggest that they might also actually have been resting places for Öselian men – especially the cremation graves which contain ethnically undistinguishable artefacts. This hypothesis is supported by the fact that the percentage of weapon burials among cremations was conspicuously high, and twice as many men as women were buried this way, at least at Laukskola.³⁶ Cremation was the prevailing burial custom on eleventh- and twelfth-century Ösel and in mainland Estonia at the same time.³⁷ Livs chiefly inhumed the dead, although cremations were not completely unknown among them either.³⁸

The cemeteries on Dole Island and at Laukskola were situated near the trade centre of Daugmale, the predecessor of Riga, right next to it across the River Dūna. Presumably they were connected with Daugmale, being burial places not only of natives but also people from other areas who had died during their

³⁴ As can be read in Henry's chronicle, this could also be impossible in a battle. In 1211, in a battle at Turaida, Germans '... even killed some Livonians who were similar to Estonians' (HCL XV.3, pp. 89–91; Brundage, pp. 109–13; translation differs slightly from that given by Brundage).

³⁵ This is, however, not true for all of the ethnic groups of early thirteenth-century Livonia. Weapons and especially jewellery of, for example, Lettgallian or Semgallian warriors can easily be distinguished from Livish ones, archaeologically at least: see, for example, *Latvijas PSR arheoloģija* (Riga, 1974), Plates 47–66.

³⁶ Gunita Zariņa, 'Salaspils Laukskolas 10.–13. gs. Iedzīvotāju paleodemogrāfija', in A. Zariņa, *Salaspils Laukskolas kapulauks 10.–13. gadsimts*, pp. 445–63.

³⁷ Jüri Selirand, *Eestlaste matmiskombed varafeodaalsete subete tärkamise perioodil (11.–13. sajand)* (Tallinn, 1974), pp. 178–90; Marika Mägi, *At the Crossroads of Space and Time: Graves, Changing Society and Ideology on Saaremaa (Ösel), 9th–13th Centuries AD* (Tallinn, 2002), pp. 125–37.

³⁸ Evald Tõnisson, *Die Gauja-Liven und ihre materielle Kultur (11. Jahrhundert. – Anfang 13. Jahrhunderts). Ein Beitrag zur ostbaltischen Frühgeschichte* (Tallinn, 1974), pp. 38–40; Šnore, 'Daugavas libiesi Doles sala'; A. Zariņa, *Salaspils Laukskolas kapulauks*, p. 408.

stay in the trade centre.³⁹ Several Öselian-looking female burials, as well as the very marked resemblance between the artefacts of Öselians and Livs generally, suggest the actual presence of Öselians at Daugmale, in an Öselian settlement at this trading place.⁴⁰

It is important to note that whoever controls the lower reaches of the River Düna influences the whole trade route along it. Henry of Livonia mentions the political power that the princes of Polotsk held over Livs before the arrival of the crusaders.⁴¹ It is not known if their ambitions led to clashes with the Öselians – information about events that happened in the eastern Baltic before Henry's chronicle is very scattered. In any case, the establishment and reinforcement of a German stronghold in Riga led to an almost instant counter-reaction by the Öselians. In 1211, Öselians cooperated with people from west and north-west Estonia – districts that were culturally similar, that is – to lay siege to the Livish centre at Treiden (Latv. Turaida). According to Henry, the action was taken to induce the Livs to join the campaign against Riga. Germans intervened on the Livish side and conclusively defeated the coastal Estonian army.⁴² The loss could, however, not have been completely devastating, since only four years later the Öselians began a new, even more grandiose and material-consuming campaign aimed at defeating Riga, this time in cooperation with western and southern Estonians. The Öselians succeeded in closing the entry to the River Düna, thus the way to the harbour of Riga, with sunken ships and special wooden structures filled with rocks. Riga was rescued by auxiliaries who appeared from the sea at the right moment.⁴³

In revenge the Germans undertook their first campaign against Ösel over the frozen sea in 1216. Henry has described this as effective, at least in plundering, but it was probably not a real success. After a quick flurry of looting, the crusader troops hurried back over the ice because of unbearable frost. Then, panicking from someone's random warning of an approaching Öselian army, several warriors collapsed and died of cold and fatigue as the army fled in haste.⁴⁴ The

³⁹ For Laukskola, see G. Zariņa, 'Salaspils Laukskolas'.

⁴⁰ Mägi, 'On the Mutual Relationship', pp. 199–204.

⁴¹ HCL I.3, p. 2. About the influence of Polotsk in the lower reaches of the River Düna, see also Anti Selart, *Livland und die Rus' im 13. Jahrhundert* (Cologne, 2007), pp. 69–78.

⁴² HCL XV.3, pp. 89–91.

⁴³ HCL XIX.2, pp. 123–34.

⁴⁴ '[The Germans] returned by their road on the ice with all their loot and captives. When some shouted that *malewa* [Estonian term for an army – M.M.] was following and others run hurriedly to the fire, certain ones of them failed and fell, frozen by the cold, and died' (HCL XIX.9, pp. 133–4; Brundage, p. 154).

campaign probably had no effect on the Öselians' military power but Henry's description gives an inkling of the fear that the crusaders felt about the Öselians.

Further attacks directly against the stronghold of Riga were made impractical by its rapid reinforcement. One may presume, however, that the Öselians continued to threaten sea routes heading to Riga, and so had a certain control over trade routes through it. The Germans ventured to launch a new campaign against the Öselians only eleven years later, in 1227, when they succeeded, at least formally, in subduing the islands.⁴⁵

In the early 1220s, politically coordinated campaigns by the Öselians were focused on nodal points on the Estonian coast. Here they faced the political ambitions of the Swedish and Danish kings. The single Swedish attempt to cut a slice of Livonia ended in disaster because of the Öselians. The Swedish King John I (r. 1216–22) had conquered Leal (Est. Lihula), a stronghold protecting one of the most important harbours and a political centre in west Estonia that belonged to Ösel's direct sphere of influence. Establishing a Swedish castle was clearly in conflict with the political interests of the Öselians, who consequently attacked the stronghold in the summer of 1220, conquered it and killed the entire Swedish garrison.⁴⁶

North-west Estonia, especially the environs of Reval, is an area where archaeological evidence indicates cultural consistency with Ösel through most of prehistory. The subjugation of the most significant harbour and trading place there by Danes in 1219 interfered with the Öselians' interests, among which the trade route into the east running through Reval was probably not the most marginal. The Öselians reacted by laying siege to the Danish castle in 1221 and 1223, both times in vain. These campaigns were undertaken in alliance with other coastal Estonians and the inhabitants of Warbola (Est. Varbola), but Henry clearly identifies the Öselians as the initiators of them.⁴⁷ Öselian troops were also there during the third siege of Reval in 1223, but their role then seems to have been smaller.⁴⁸

Öselian Society

Henry pays a lot of attention to the military activities of the Öselians but has nothing to say about their social organization. Not a single personal name has

⁴⁵ HCL XXX.3–5, pp. 216–21. However, German troops were not allowed to stay on Ösel, nor could they build castles there.

⁴⁶ HCL XXIV.3, pp. 172–3.

⁴⁷ HCL XXIV.7, pp. 176–7; XXVI.11, p. 192.

⁴⁸ HCL XXVII.3, pp. 196–7.

been brought forward in connection with the Öselians, making it impossible for any of their leaders to be identified. Henry's descriptions of attacks and campaigns initiated by the Öselians give the impression of a society that was able to organize even large-scale operations, operations which seem to have been carried out under the leadership of conventional *seniores*, *meliores* or, in one case, *nobiles*. Although Henry treats the Öselians as one unit, there is no reason to assume that all districts of the islands participated in all the attacks described in the chronicle.

The Viking-style raids described by Henry suggest a society with weak or non-existent central power. The only possible allusion to development in this direction is Henry's definition of the hillfort of Waldia (Ger. Wolde, Est. Valjala) during the campaign in 1227, as having a central position on Ösel: the '... fort, called Waldia, in the midst of Oesel. Waldia is the strongest city among all those of the Oeselians.'⁴⁹ Waldia was the only stone castle on Ösel, built in the twelfth century at a geopolitically central point, a fact which seems to support Henry's definition.⁵⁰ It is, however, possible that the chronicler overestimated the importance of Waldia in order to make the achievement of the German conquerors seem more significant.

Foreign society, 'the Other', has in most cases been seen through the prism of the observer's own society. In most chronicles of the Northern crusades, pagan princes and their retainers were presented following the clear assumption that they were organized in the same way and possessed the same power as potentates in the writer's society. It is, however, not sure whether this really was so. Henry must have faced the same problem, trying to find a hierarchical and individual-based social organization as was common in Christian Europe among the inhabitants of the eastern Baltic. For some ethnic groups this was obviously easier. The chronicler describes the princes of Kokenhusen (Latv. Koknese) and Gerzike (Latv. Jersika); the titles of princes (*dux*, *princeps*) or kings (*konic*, *rex*) were also attributed to Semgallians, Curonians and Lithuanians. The social organization of the Estonians and the Livs has obviously confused Henry, though. The only really higher-ranked person who has ever been mentioned, the Livish chieftain Caupo, was entitled 'a kind of a king and elder' (*quasi rex et senior*).⁵¹

Since written sources are virtually lacking, the interpretation of Öselian, as well as neighbouring Baltic Finnic, society rests almost entirely on archaeological evidence. Comparing this with the archaeological sites of neighbouring Baltic countries or, for instance, Viking Age Scandinavia, certain

⁴⁹ HCL XXX.5, pp. 220–21; Brundage, p. 243.

⁵⁰ Mägi, *At the Crossroads*, p. 53.

⁵¹ HCL VII.3, p. 21; Brundage, p. 43. For a discussion on the eastern Baltic elites and their representation in the Christian sources, see, for example, Vassar and Tarvel, 'Die ostbaltischen Stämme', p. 29.

discrepancies cannot be overlooked, especially those involving burial customs. First of all, an antagonism between individualistic and collectivistic attitudes should be pointed out in this context. With the exception of a few periods and areas, Estonians are throughout prehistory characterized by strongly expressed collectivistic burial customs, where the remains of the dead are mixed in one big grave. The Scandinavian and Baltic neighbours of the Estonians, on the contrary, practised individual burials, with abundantly equipped warrior graves starting from as early as the end of the Stone Age.

Burial customs reflect in one way or another the society that practised them. Rites emphasizing collective attitudes suggest a social organization that rests upon division into clans or expanded families, something presumably more egalitarian than, for instance, Viking Age Scandinavia. The many weapons that appear in Estonian collective graves starting from the end of the tenth century bear witness to the growing importance of warrior status, which, nevertheless, had by the beginning of the thirteenth century obviously not been able to change the basic egalitarian structure of social organization.⁵²

Ösel consists of islands, and its archaeological evidence expresses clear cultural peculiarity – something demonstrated well by female jewellery, for instance. On the other hand, Ösel has received cultural impulses from nearly all the surrounding areas. It is probably not a coincidence that Ösel is among the few districts in the territory of present Estonia where burial customs clearly became more individual in the seventh century, and where the percentage of weapon graves in the pre-conquest period was higher than anywhere else in the country. Accordingly, we may also presume that Öselian society resembled somewhat more than elsewhere in present-day Estonia that of its Baltic or Scandinavian neighbours. This fact is perhaps also indicated by Henry when he called the leaders of Waldia *nobiles*, a term that he normally reserved for Western European nobility.⁵³

A clear orientation towards warrior values and, it can be surmised, a deeper stratification of society on Ösel is probably a result of intensive overseas communication. Archaeological material demonstrates particularly frequent contacts with Gotland, a link that also appears in Henry's chronicle.⁵⁴ This cultural exchange between the two islands could have been promoted by somewhat similar social organization, especially considering that the society on Gotland was presumably somewhat more egalitarian than on mainland Sweden.

⁵² Marika Mägi, 'Collectivity Versus Individuality: The Warrior Ideology of Iron Age Burial Rites on Saaremaa,' *Archaeologia Baltica* 8 (2007), 263–72.

⁵³ HCL XXX.5, pp. 220–21.

⁵⁴ HCL VII.2, pp. 19–20; XXX.1, pp. 215–16.

There has been a tradition in Estonian archaeology and historiography to conceive of the late-prehistoric Öselians as members of a democratic society of rural pirates which was even more egalitarian than society in mainland Estonia, and similar to the 'republic of peasants' on Gotland.⁵⁵ This is a simplified interpretation that is furthermore based on a presumption that society on Ösel, as well as in the rest of Estonia, was less developed than among neighbours. Thus it also presumes that if the social development had continued without the intervention of the crusaders, princedoms would have also formed on Ösel and Estonia, and the society would have become similar to that in the rest of contemporary Europe.

The grounds for such assumptions are, however, weak. A social organization with strong collective traditions should not be considered as a lower stage of social development but as a cultural peculiarity, through which a particular society harmonized with its natural environment and geographic circumstances. Furthermore, the same collective attitudes were obvious in Estonian society after the conquest. No higher aristocracy evolved either on medieval Ösel or in the rest of Estonia, and the country remained politically fragmented between different overlords throughout the Middle Ages. The role that vassals or landed gentry played in the political systems of medieval Livonia was remarkable.

Despite its egalitarian features, it is difficult to imagine Öselian society as democratic, either before or after the conquest. Prehistoric stone graves, despite the collective burials, were erected only for chosen families. In the twelfth century, at least, individual burials appear among the collective ones, some of them equipped with conspicuous abundance compared with others.⁵⁶ Öselian society was, in all probability, divided into clans, consisting of extended families, of which one was dominant. Members of the dominant family were elected as representatives of the clan, chieftains in peaceful times as well as warlords. Some of the dominant families were probably more influential than others, but this authority rested upon collective, or family-based, property and power, and was not directly associable with particular individuals. Politically coordinated activity suggests affiliations between clans at least at district level, where decisions were made by some council of clan representatives. Power in such political and social organizations can be characterized as collective but there are certainly chieftains elected to administer it. They can, however, rotate, come from different elite families and their authority can be limited.

⁵⁵ During recent decades, the concept of the 'republic of peasants' on Gotland has been challenged by some scholars. See, for example, Anders Carlsson, 'Gotland och Visby mellan vikingatid och medeltid – ett debattinlägg', *Meta. Medeltidsarkeologisk tidskrift* 3 (1990), 4–15.

⁵⁶ Mägi, *At the Crossroads*, pp. 115–24.

Henry of Livonia, as well as other crusaders coming from countries with inherited political and economic hierarchy, was obviously not able to determine in such societies who ruled them, or who made ultimate decisions. They might have been confused about who to deal with for negotiations, for concluding treaties or for accepting Christianity. In actual communication, this probably caused serious misunderstandings and talk at cross purposes.

Although perhaps incomprehensible for the crusaders, a society which had collective power structures could, however, function successfully at least at regional level, and could from time to time cooperate with neighbouring regions – certainly not less effectively than societies with inherited hierarchical structures, when they were fragmented into smaller political units. Öselian chieftains and elite families were presumably well informed about the political situations around their islands and able to undertake appropriate political manoeuvres for solving them.

The image of an underdeveloped peasant society has induced a vision of Öselians, as well as other Estonians, as politically passive groups, who tried and were able to resolve situations only in a military way. This is, however, quite a one-sided view, based on the crusading tradition, and on biased attitudes that were put forward by early Baltic-German historians. Differences in social organization could, however, create impassable obstacles when thirteenth-century potentates tried to conclude political treaties. Dealing directly with a local prince, and subjugating him as a vassal, a process used in several other districts conquered by crusaders, was not possible on Ösel.

The Öselians in the Political Games of the Early Thirteenth Century

Overseas raids and intensive communication with neighbours suggest that the Öselian leaders had a good knowledge of early thirteenth-century political reality. Strong connections with Gotland played a large part in this. By the beginning of the thirteenth century, Gotland had been taxed by the Swedish king for a couple of centuries, without markedly decreasing the influence of the local elite. In the political situation that developed on the eastern shore of the Baltic by the 1210s and 1220s it must have become clear to the Öselian leaders that their way of life could not last forever. When considering future options, Gotland offered certainly the most tempting example of political organization.

The most promising partner for Ösel would have been one of the great powers whose interests clashed in the fight for the eastern shore of the Baltic. According to Henry, the Öselians joined forces with other coastal Estonians, occasionally probably also with the Curonians, but none of these close ethnic groups was able to offer political guarantees. As the example of Gotland had demonstrated,

participating in negotiations as an independent political power would certainly lead to a treaty more advantageous for the local elite than capitulation to military pressure. Voluntary submission would have enabled Öselian elite families to maintain their power and property. Geographical position farther away from a power centre would improve the chances of retaining local authority, as a result of which the Danish king was probably considered by the Öselians a more attractive overlord than dubious German crusaders at close quarters across the sea.

From the very beginning of the thirteenth century, at the latest, the Danish kingdom had expressed an interest in subduing Ösel. This has traditionally been attributed to the plundering raids of the Öselians on the Danish coasts.⁵⁷ The Danish campaign to Ösel in 1206 has thus been seen as revenge for an Öselian looting raid to present-day southern Sweden in 1203. This event is, however, described solely by Henry, whose main interest lies entirely in the battle between Germans and Öselians in Visby.⁵⁸ Again, the chronicler might have exaggerated the plundering activity of the Öselians in order to justify the German attack against them. The actual extent of the Öselian raids is thus uncertain, and there are only weak grounds to believe that these were the sole reason for inspiring the king of Denmark to attack Ösel with a substantial navy. Although crusading ideology played a role in it, there seem to be more pragmatic reasons why exactly the Öselians were chosen as the first target in Livonia. The piracy of Öselians on a more general level, their control over the trade routes towards the East, and their attacks on ships that did not submit to them, constitute more plausible grounds for the Danish desire to subdue Ösel.

Unfortunately, Danish sources about the events in the eastern Baltic are laconic, and the Danish campaigns to Ösel are mainly described in Henry's chronicle. Henry's attitude towards the Danes was not, however, especially friendly, something mainly caused by their rivalry with the German crusaders in the fight for medieval Livonia. As a result, he often referred to events involving the Danish forces only briefly or incompletely. Some activities Henry chose not to refer to at all, presumably viewing them as irrelevant for his interpretations.⁵⁹

According to Henry, the first Danish campaign to Ösel resulted in the construction of a wooden fortification that was in any case soon burnt down,

⁵⁷ For example, Tore Nyberg, 'Kreuzzug und Handel in der Ostsee zur dänischen Zeit Lübecks', in *Lübeck 1226. Reichsfreiheit und frühe Stadt im Auftrage des Vereins für Lübeckische Geschichte und Altertumskunde*, ed. Olov Ahlers et al. (Lübeck, 1976), pp. 173–206; Enn Tarvel, 'Die dänische Ostseepolitik im 11.–13. Jahrhundert', in *Studien der Eisenzeit zum Mittelalter. Festschrift für Michael Müller-Wille*, ed. Anke Wesse (Neumünster, 1998), pp. 53–9.

⁵⁸ HCL VII.1–2, pp. 18–20.

⁵⁹ Lind et al., *Danske korstog*, p. 160.

since nobody wanted to stay there after the army left.⁶⁰ The importance of this event was underlined by the fact that the Danes were led by Anders Sunesen, archbishop of Lund (1201–28), and according to some sources also by King Valdemar II (r. 1202–41). Nevertheless, the campaign seems to have failed – after burning the castle, the navy turned back to Denmark, while the archbishop sailed to Riga and stayed there for the winter. What the role of the Öselians in these events was – besides the fact that they clearly succeeded in defending their lands and interests – is unknown.

It took as long as 17 years before the Danes tried again – in 1222. By then, the political situation had changed dramatically. North Estonia had been subdued by the Danish crown three years earlier, and in 1221 King Valdemar II had signed a contract with Bishop Albert putting the whole of Livonia under Danish jurisdiction.⁶¹

It was, however, not so simple to take possession of Livonia, as was demonstrated by the events that followed. By 1221 the Öselians were one of the most dangerous military forces threatening Danish supremacy in the region. Even more, Öselians had taken active and politically coordinated action, and had been quite successful in this, as shown before. In 1220, they had destroyed the Swedish stronghold at Leal.⁶² In April 1221 the Öselians had undertaken a two-week siege of Reval,⁶³ which ended unsuccessfully for them but nevertheless represented a severe danger to the Danish stronghold in North Estonia. The castle had had a narrow escape from the siege, and the possibility of a new assault from Ösel remained. As a reaction, the Danish navy landed on Ösel in the spring or summer of 1222, under the leadership of King Valdemar II.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ HCL X.13, pp. 43–4.

⁶¹ Peep P. Rebane, *Denmark and the Baltic Crusade, 1150–1227*, unpublished dissertation for the degree of PhD (Michigan State University, 1969), manuscript in the Library of the Institute of History, Tallinn University, p. 137; Lind et al., *Danske korstog*, pp. 224–6.

⁶² HCL XXIV.3, p. 74.

⁶³ HCL XXIV.7, p. 78.

⁶⁴ Some scholars have suggested winter 1222 as the time of the Danish campaign. This is, however, hardly possible. We must take into consideration that until the nineteenth century the Estonian islands became isolated from the mainland, sometimes for several months in late autumn and early spring, when the sea was not navigable but there was no load-bearing ice either. It is more or less certain that the Danes sailed to Ösel, as otherwise the implication would be that the king, together with his army, had already come to mainland Estonia several months earlier, when the sea was navigable, and waited for the sea to freeze (an event that might not even happen). It is also unlikely that the campaign was timed for the period of strong storms and possible ice in early spring or late autumn. Therefore, the earliest likely time in 1222 for the campaign to have taken place was late April or May. Since the last

Henry offers a detailed but incomplete description of the events. His story, however, contains illogical aspects and even contradictions – as often occurs when he describes Danish activities. According to him, the king came to Ösel with a big army and started to build a stone castle. Henry also mentions some resistance but is unusually short of detail about it. The description of the reaction of the Öselians consists of a rather indistinct statement about Danes setting out to fight the Öselians and not being able to manage this without the help of Count Albert of Orlamünde (r. 1201–25), who was a vassal of the Danish king.⁶⁵ Some conflict with locals was thus brought into the chronicle predominantly to indicate the crucial role that was played by the German count. Whether these fights extended further beyond small clashes to, for instance, the plundering of some villages remains uncertain.⁶⁶ It seems likely, however, that there was no serious resistance immediately after the landing of the Danes.

At first glance, the story seems to proceed similarly to that of the seizure of Reval by the Danes in 1219, when Estonian leaders, according to Henry, first concluded a peace treaty with the king of Denmark, but treacherously attacked three days later.⁶⁷ One possible explanation for this lies in the aforementioned paradox of collective power. The ones welcoming Valdemar II were probably elders of Revalia, the district surrounding the Lyndanisse castle. Nevertheless, the Lyndanisse hillfort and harbour were by the beginning of the thirteenth century not simply the centre of Revalia, but the most important trading place for the whole of north-western Estonia, perhaps even for the whole northern part of the country.⁶⁸ The rest of the districts forming the hinterland of Reval probably disagreed with the decision of the Revalia elders, and this disagreement resulted in the assault against the Danish troops.

Danes, after the surrender of their fort, also left by ship, the departure must have happened in early autumn 1222 at the latest. After that, the Öselians went to the mainland to encourage general resistance, at least according to Henry. The next exact date given in the chronicle is 29 January 1223, and describes events connected to the great Estonian uprising: HCL XXVI.5, pp. 189–90; see also, for example, Ernst Bonnell, *Russisch-liwländische Chronographie von der Mitte des neunten Jahrhunderts bis zum Jahre 1410* (St. Petersburg, 1862), p. 40; Richard Haussman, *Das Ringen der Deutschen und Dänen um den Besitz Estlands bis 1227* (Dorpat, 1871), pp. 43–6.

⁶⁵ HCL XXVI.2, pp. 187–8.

⁶⁶ In connection with the Danes, Henry always tries to show how ineffectual they were without some allies to help them. The story of Count Albert's help in the fight against the Öselians has a parallel in the Battle of Lyndanisse in 1219, which, according to Henry, was won by the Danes only because of timely help from another vassal of the Danish king, the Vendic Prince Wenceslaus (HCL XXIII.2, pp. 154–6).

⁶⁷ HCL XXIII.2, pp. 154–6.

⁶⁸ Mägi, 'Iru linnusest Püha Birgitta kloostriini'.

On Ösel, Öselians attacked the Danish castle several months after the landing of the Danish navy. It is also difficult to believe, especially taking into consideration the events that followed, that the castle was built under the protection of some separate treaty with some Öselian leaders only. Does it appear, therefore, that the most feared pagans of the region simply let themselves be subjugated without putting up a fight?

The building of the stone castle raises some questions, too. The whole episode of the Danes on Ösel, from the first attack until the attack on the castle, could not have lasted longer than five or six months.⁶⁹ Although the Öselians sometimes used stone as building material, they knew nothing of mortar. Erecting a stone castle requires the well-organized provision of building stone from local quarries, and the preparation of mortar also takes time.⁷⁰ It is possible that powdered mortar was brought along in Danish ships, but this is difficult to believe of the rest of the building material. Breaking stones from quarries is difficult to organize rapidly in a hostile and unknown land, and such major work on Ösel therefore implies some cooperation with local authorities. The king of Denmark seems to have been fairly confident about what he was doing on Ösel – and that at a time when the Öselians had only recently threatened mainland Danish power with their attacks to Reval.

The Danish campaign on Ösel was thus thoroughly prepared. The same scenario as three years earlier at Reval was repeated, and a rapid conclusion attempted. In relation to both of these episodes then, a valid question is whether the king of Denmark could already have had some preliminary treaty with local authorities before his campaign. The earlier failure at Reval might have provided a lesson in turning to the right representatives of the local power on Ösel, or enough of them, to guarantee a treaty valid for the whole region. In any case, the majority of Öselians seemed to accept the presence of Danish troops on their islands, as became especially apparent in Henry's description of subsequent negotiations.

As it appears from the chronicle, soon after the landing of the Danes on Ösel, they were visited by a notably high-ranking delegation of German crusaders: the Bishop of Riga, the Master of the Sword Brethren, elders of the Livs and other important persons. The personnel of the delegation is particularly surprising considering that Ösel was treated by the Germans as a hostile and most dangerous area, which they normally tried to avoid. The Estonian islands, including the island of Dagö, cover quite a large area (larger, for instance, than Gotland), and it is hard to imagine that the Danish king had subdued it all by force in a short

⁶⁹ See footnote 64 above.

⁷⁰ It is also possible to build a stone castle without mortar but then the quantity of building stones must be increased.

time and with only little resistance, as Henry's chronicle claims. The area was also full of small islands and islets, straits and bays, and establishing proper military control over these waters would certainly take longer than a few months. Even in his brief description of the resistance of the Öselians, Henry did not state that they were defeated.⁷¹ If the German crusaders felt themselves safe enough to sail to Ösel in the company of more or less all the leaders of their community, they must have been quite secure in the safety of the Öselian waters. This would only have been possible with a full guarantee from the Öselians themselves.

Meanwhile, as we can learn from the chronicle, some Öselians were probably at Warbola hillfort on mainland Estonia, where they learned how to build and use a traction trebuchet (called a *paterell* by Henry).⁷² Warbola was the biggest stone hillfort in Estonia, within whose walls about 600–800 people could have lived in its heyday.⁷³ After it fell to the Danish forces, these numbers also included the Danes, probably representatives of the Danish crown and priests, some of whom were in any case killed there in 1223.⁷⁴ The traction trebuchet had been given to the Warbola leaders by the Danes, and the new military technology was now also spread to the Öselians. It is hard to believe that this happened without the full knowledge of the Danish authorities.

At the same time, negotiations between the Danish and German crusaders turned out to be successful. The king accepted the rights of the Order and the bishops in Saccala (Est. Sakala) and Ugaunia (Ger. Ugaunien, Est. Ugandi), and they, in turn, swore fidelity and support to the king in the fight against the

⁷¹ HCL XXVI.2, pp. 187–8.

⁷² Here, Henry's text contains some contradictions. According to him, some Öselians went to Warbola to learn about the building of a traction trebuchet at the beginning of the siege of the Danish castle, came back to Ösel and spread their knowledge, after which 17 trebuchets were built in different parts of the islands. After this statement, it is said that the Öselians all came together with their traction trebuchets, and hurled stones at the castle for five days (HCL XXVI.2, pp. 187–8). Presuming that travelling, learning new technology and building the machines must have taken time, it is, however, clear that the Öselians had to go to Warbola for at least some weeks but more likely even some months before the siege of the Danish castle. Accordingly, the Öselians were taught to build traction trebuchets during the time when their relationship with the Danes was, at least formally, good.

⁷³ Ülle Tamla, 'The Hillfort of Varbola-Jaanilinn and the Settlement at Jalase', in *Estonia: Nature, Man and Cultural Heritage: Proceedings of a Round Table Held at Tallinn, April 1991 at the Estonian Academy of Sciences*, ed. Tony Hackens, Valter Lang and Urve Miller (Strasbourg, 1992), pp. 145–55; Evald Tõnisson, 'Die Wallburg Warbola – ein Zentrum im westlichen Estland. Aspekte zur militärischen, politischen und sozialen Funktion', in *Europeans or Not? Local Level Strategies on the Baltic Rim 1100–1400 AD*, ed. Nils Blomkvist and Sven-Olaf Lindquist (Oskarshamn, 1999), pp. 173–84.

⁷⁴ HCL XXVI.5, pp. 189–90.

Russians and the pagans. The Danes took high-ranking hostages: the brother of Bishop Albert and several brethren of the Order.⁷⁵ Satisfied with the established situation in Livonia, King Valdemar sailed back to Denmark.

Only now, probably after learning the results of the negotiations, did the Öselians attack. The assault took place after the king, probably together with most of the navy, had left, something which also indicates that the king felt his support was comparatively strong on Ösel. Details of the negotiations and the king's opinion about the position of Ösel or the northern provinces in Estonia remain unknown; for these, Henry's description is too laconic. It seems likely that the Öselians had expected to be well placed, as allies of the king of Denmark, to overthrow the supremacy of the Germans in the lower reaches of the Düna River. The Danish king, if he had conquered Ösel, would have gained a favourable position for blockading Riga, as he had done sometime before with Lübeck.⁷⁶ The Öselians had good reason to hope that their control role over the sea routes would only be strengthened by their alliance with the Danes. It seems probable, however, that King Valdemar, although in a powerful position with his army on Ösel, preferred a treaty to military conflict with the German crusaders.

In any case, the Öselians seem not to have accepted the results. They laid siege to the Danish castle, which had only a stone wall but no inside buildings, and used their trebuchets to throw large stones at it. After five days, the Öselians asked the Danes to leave. According to Henry, they said: 'Since you in this fort know that you cannot be saved at all from our continued attack, we urge and beseech you that, after making peace with us, you all leave the fort, safe and unarmed, and leave us the fort and our land.'⁷⁷ Although we only have Henry's words, the formulation sounds unusually polite, especially considering that the Öselians were normally depicted as rough and brutal pagans. The Danes took the advice and left the fort together with their belongings, while Theodoric of Buxhövdén, the brother of the bishop of Riga, and seven Danes were kept by the Öselians as hostages – now probably guaranteeing another treaty between the Öselians, Danes and Germans.

The immediate result of the events on Ösel was a general war against both German and Danish overlordship on the mainland of Estonia, which was, at least according to Henry, initiated by the Öselians. By 1223, the only

⁷⁵ Some historians have seen this as creating a joint Danish–German garrison in the Danish castle on Ösel, led by Theodoric (for example, Rebane, *Denmark and the Baltic Crusade*, p. 142; Tarvel, 'Piiskopi- ja orduaeg').

⁷⁶ Haussman, *Das Ringen der Deutschen und Dänen*, p. 43; Lind et al., *Danske korstog*, pp. 215–27.

⁷⁷ HCL XXVI.2, pp. 187–8; Brundage, pp. 205–6.

stronghold of the crusaders still standing on the territory of present-day Estonia was Reval, and even that was repeatedly under siege.⁷⁸ This situation, however, lasted no longer than a couple of months: German crusaders, mainly under the leadership of the Order, soon succeeded in re-conquering the country. Still, the preliminary success of the Estonian campaign in 1223 eloquently demonstrated how insecure the position of the crusaders really was. The conquerors could not survive without paying attention to local magnates and, as was remarkably demonstrated by the Öselian initiative in 1223, it made particular sense to take into account the military power of the Öselians. It is also crucial to take this into consideration when interpreting the Danish episode on Ösel in 1222.

Henry, who describes the events on Ösel in 1222, says nothing that would indicate a true crusade by the Danes. This could easily have been an intentional choice by the chronicle, as he mentions neither conversion nor the building of churches on Ösel before the Germans' victorious campaign in 1227. Although this chapter argues that the reasons for the Danish special interest in subduing Ösel were predominantly secular, their hostilities in Livonia were still driven by the ideology of crusade. The acceptance of Christianity might presumably have been the main prerequisite for contracting treaties with local authorities, as well as the first consequence after submission by force.

There is no true evidence of a church or churches on the Estonian islands before the official Christianization, with the exception of a couple of post holes of an earlier wooden building right next to the Peude (Est. Pöide) church.⁷⁹ It should also be pointed out that when Henry first finished his chronicle in 1226 and praised the peace in Livonia, he skilfully avoided the problem of the Öselians as one of the most troublesome enemies of the church still remaining unbaptized.⁸⁰ When describing the visit of William of Modena in 1226 in chapter 29 of his chronicle, he writes of the Öselians, together with other inhabitants of Livonia, going to meet the papal legate.⁸¹ Archaeological and architectural

⁷⁸ Rebane, *Denmark and the Baltic Crusade*, pp. 233–4; Lind et al., *Danske korstog*, pp. 227–8.

⁷⁹ Concerning the earliest churches on Ösel, see also Jaak Mäll, 'Verwaltungsgeschichte und Christianisierung der Insel Ösel im 13.–14. Jahrhundert', in *Culture Clash or Compromise? The Europeanisation of the Baltic Sea Area 1100–1400 AD*, ed. Nils Blomkvist (Visby, 1998), pp. 158–66 (here 162–5).

⁸⁰ All researchers agree that chapter 30 was added later, after the first version of the chronicle was finished. Chapter 30 describes the subordination of Ösel by the German crusaders in 1227. Thus, when Henry first finished his writing, he did not know and probably did not even imagine that the Germans would succeed in subduing the Estonian islands soon afterwards. When Henry decided to write his chronicle in 1226, the political situation must have seemed stabilized and safe to him.

⁸¹ HCL XXIX.4, p. 211.

evidence on Ösel has also shown that Christian attitudes were accepted by the Öselian leaders immediately after the official conversion in 1227. It seems to have been the Öselian leaders, or elite families, who coordinated the building of the first stone churches in the late 1220s and early 1230s, closely following the example of church building on Gotland.⁸²

Archaeologists and art historians have also tried to locate the Danish castle, so far still in vain. The castle was presumably built near the coast, probably in some existing centre or in its vicinity, and in the neighbourhood of quarries – like the Lyndanisse castle that the Danish crusaders later chose as their stronghold in Reval. Some scholars have suggested that the Danish castle on Ösel might have been on the coast of the Strait of Soela between Ösel and Dagö, where some ruins have been traditionally connected with it.⁸³ On an early nineteenth-century map the ruins are marked as 'Alte Schwed. Schanze'.⁸⁴ The area with ruins has mainly been destroyed by now, but its location very close to the sea suggests that the ruins had belonged to some coastal fortification from the late medieval or early modern period. In the thirteenth century, the place must have still been covered with water.

Another possible location for the Danish castle that has sometimes been suggested is the later town of Arensburg (Est. Kuressaare), where the bishop established his fort in the late thirteenth century. This seems much more probable for several reasons. Medieval Arensburg was situated at an outstanding harbour site, only five or six miles away from the best quarries of the island. The district around it had a central position on Ösel, and its old centre was the stronghold of Carmel (Est. Kaarma) about six miles inland.⁸⁵ The third possible location would be Soneburg (Est. Maasilinn) at the north-eastern end of the main island, where the Order erected its castle in the fourteenth century. This location is also characterized by a one-time good, deep harbour, and quarries just across the sea on the island of Moon (Est. Muhu). Arensburg and Soneburg can be no more than hypothetical locations for the Danish fort, however, since the possibility that some of it has survived under later building works is slight.

A special relationship between the Öselians and the Danes is also hinted at in some remarks made by Henry in chapter 30, added later to his chronicle. For instance, in 1226, when William of Modena, the legate of the Pope, urged people on Gotland to go to war against the Öselians, both the Danes and the Gotlanders refused.⁸⁶ Henry also describes how, in the same year, German troops were sent

⁸² Mägi, *At the Crossroads*, pp. 154–7; Kersti Markus, *Från Gotland till Estland. Kyrkokonst och politik under 1200-talet* (Kristianstad, 1999).

⁸³ See also Tarvel, 'Piiskopi- ja orduaeg', pp. 80–81.

⁸⁴ Estonian History Archives 2072-311-37.

⁸⁵ Mägi, *At the Crossroads*, p. 39.

⁸⁶ HCL XXX.1, pp. 215–16.

to Vironia (Ger. Wierland, Est. Virumaa) to protect the locals against Danes and Öselians.⁸⁷ It remains uncertain, however, whether the latter had anything to do with the king's troops, or whether it was just a random war band on another looting raid.

Conclusions

In Western crusading historiography, the inhabitants of what is now Estonia are traditionally described as politically passive. This is as a rule explained by their society being underdeveloped in comparison with neighbours, a judgement that in itself indicates a prejudiced approach. Estonian historiography, on the other hand, has for a long time been influenced by concepts of nationalism which excluded the notion of possible incipient treaties with the conquerors. It has been presumed by default that local leaders' understanding of political circumstances was poor, and their attitude to crusaders uncompromising.

The descriptions of the activities of the Öselians, as they appear in Henry's chronicle of Livonia, allow us to reconsider this opinion. It is clear that Henry was confused by the power relations in Öselian society. Attitudes towards pagans characteristic of his time, as well as Henry's self-image as a true fighter for the Christian church, were enough to prevent an adequate picture of early thirteenth-century events on Ösel. The larger-scale military actions of the Öselians, as they appear in the chronicle, were, however, not chaotic but carried out to achieve political ambitions, thus indicating a better understanding of political reality than has traditionally been assumed.

By the beginning of the 1220s, the Öselians must have learned that endless resistance to crusaders from different directions was fruitless. A solution to the situation was presumably seen not only in military action but also in negotiation. Surrender to the king of Denmark, who at that time had the most powerful position in Livonia, would have been a good chance for the elders of Ösel to keep their position in society. The subordination of Ösel would have been beneficial for the king, too. Why nothing came of it, we can only guess. The different social organization of the Öselians supposedly had its role to play in it – in the system of collective power, treaties could not be concluded with individuals but they probably needed approval by some sort of council. The ideology of the crusades cannot be underestimated either: thirteenth-century Öselians were nevertheless pagans, and might not have been considered equal partners by a Christian king.

⁸⁷ HCL XXX.2, p. 216.

PART III

Appropriations

Chapter 14

The Use and Uselessness of the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia in the Middle Ages

Anti Selart

Appel vnnd Berenn de ete wy gernn/

By schone Junckfrewen slepe wy gernn

Gloss in *Codex Zam.*, fol. 68^v

In the history of the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries in Estonia, Latvia and all of the Baltic Sea countries, the significance of the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia cannot be overestimated.¹ It is this chronicle, above all, first published in print as early as in 1740,² that has shaped the image of the Livonian crusades and the beginnings of Christianization in the area: whether writers on the topic agree with the chronicler or disagree and oppose him; whether they naively trust the text of the chronicle or subject it to sophisticated source criticism. The chronicle has been translated into a number of modern languages and has also attracted readers outside its academic audience.

Behind this background it is indeed remarkable that the large-scale popularity of the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia only emerged in modern times. Few recorded instances of the chronicle being read or utilized during the Middle Ages, up until the end of the fifteenth century, survive.³ In itself, this is not extraordinary: the popularity of a historiographical work in the Middle Ages and an evaluation of this in modern historical scholarship do not need to coincide, indeed. For instance, the immense popularity of the thirteenth-century chronicle of Martin of Troppau (d. 1278) in medieval times contrasts

¹ This article was written with the support of grants nos 7129 and 7744 awarded by the Estonian Science Foundation.

² *Origines Livoniae sacrae et civilis, seu chronicon Livonicum vetus ...*, ed. Johann Daniel Gruber (Frankfurt and Leipzig, 1740). On the medieval Livonian chronicles, see Sulev Vahtre, 'Kroniki bałtyckie (inflanckie) XIII–XVIII wieku jako źródła historyczne (Stan badań)', *Zapiski Historyczne* 34/4 (1969), 73–89; Norbert Angermann, 'Die mittelalterliche Chronistik', in *Geschichte der deutschbaltischen Geschichtsschreibung*, ed. Georg von Rauch (Cologne and Vienna, 1986), pp. 3–20.

³ Angermann, 'Die mittelalterliche Chronistik', p. 9.

with the relatively low evaluation given to it by positivistic historiography.⁴ Furthermore, the fact that only one medieval copy of Henry's work has been preserved is in fact not extraordinary either, especially for a regional chronicle.⁵ Baltic-German historian Leonid Arbusow Junior, the publisher of the so far best edition of the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia, registered in the 1920s the total of 16 preserved full and partial manuscripts of the chronicle, ranging from the beginning of the fourteenth century up until the eighteenth. Nevertheless, 11 of these were secondary copies of already known manuscripts.⁶

A narrative about past events may be a work of reminiscence, teaching, literature or interest in curiosities and anecdotes. However, it is also a legitimization and explanation with regard to the existing order and, by way of this, maybe also the future, which is ultimately likely to become an act of legitimization. The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia is very strongly apologetic; it provides a reasoning for the priority and privileges of the Church of Riga in the whole of Livonia, seen through the prism of the era in which it was written, probably the 1220s, when the Danish king was the main opponent of the bishop of Riga and of the military Order of the Sword Brethren.⁷ Afterwards the political situation changed totally. From the second half of the thirteenth century onwards, the history of medieval Livonia was crucially shaped by the conflict between the Teutonic Order and the Rigan archbishop to control the town of Riga and obtain a hegemonic position in the country as a whole. The other Livonian magnates – the bishops of Dorpat (Est. Tartu), Ösel (Est. Saaremaa), and Curoña (Ger. Kurland, Latv. Kurzeme) – likewise participated in the conflict. Countries neighbouring Livonia also became involved in the struggles and litigations. The parties in the conflict incessantly attempted to seek for their right with higher arbiters, primarily at the Papal Curia. The answer to the question of who had a certain right was often sought in history, in one-time

⁴ Arnold Esch, 'Überlieferungs-Chance und Überlieferungs-Zufall als methodisches Problem des Historikers', *Historische Zeitschrift* 240 (1985), 529–70 (here 555–7).

⁵ Cf. Elisabeth M.C. van Houts, *Local and Regional Chronicles* (Turnhout, 1995), pp. 54–5.

⁶ Leonid Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung des "Chronicon Livoniae" Heinrichs von Lettland', *Latvijas Universitātes Raksti* 15 (1926), 189–341; 16 (1927), 125–202; Albert Bauer, 'Einleitung' in HCL, pp. V–LXIV (here XXXVII–L); Enn Tarvel, 'Sissejuhatus', in *Henriku Liivimaa kroonika*, trans. Richard Kleis, ed. Enn Tarvel (Tallinn, 1982), pp. 5–21 (here 10–12).

⁷ Anti Selart, 'Iam tunc ... The Political Context of the First Part of the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia', in *The Medieval Chronicle*, vol. 5, ed. Erik Kooper (Amsterdam and New York, 2008), pp. 197–209. See also Andris Levans, 'Die lebendigen Toten. Memoria in der Kanzlei der Erzbischöfe von Riga im Spätmittelalter', in *Kollektivität und Individualität. Der Mensch im östlichen Europa. Festschrift für Prof. Dr. Norbert Angermann zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Karsten Brüggemann et al. (Hamburg, 2001), pp. 3–35 (here 18).

legal relationships and foregone privileges. Yet the chronicle of Henry was hardly ever utilized in this situation of a continuous lack of legitimacy in Livonia. The German historian Norbert Angermann refers to this fact as 'surprising'.⁸ Was it that the legitimization offered by Henry happened to be somewhat undesirable for posterity?

In answering this question, it is first of all helpful to pay attention to very significant political reorganizations taking place in Livonia between the 1230s and the 1250s. The Order of the Sword Brethren, having indeed actually assumed a hegemonic position in Livonia after 1227, was defeated by the Samogitians and Lithuanians at the Battle of Saule in 1236, and joined the Teutonic Order in 1237.⁹ Although the pretensions of Danish kings to ruling Estonia did not vanish after the compromise achieved between the king and the Order in the form of the 1238 Stensby Treaty,¹⁰ following the death of Valdemar II in 1241, kings of Denmark seldom actively intervened in Livonian internal disputes; besides, in 1346, Valdemar IV (r. 1340–75) sold his Duchy of Estonia to the Teutonic Order. Nevertheless, following this event, the Danes still episodically asserted their historic right to Estonia.¹¹ This claim, however, tended to be more

⁸ Angermann, 'Die mittelalterliche Chronistik', p. 9. See also Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung', 15, pp. 285–6.

⁹ Klaus Militzer, *Von Akkon zur Marienburg. Verfassung, Verwaltung und Sozialstruktur des Deutschen Ordens 1190–1309* (Marburg, 1999), pp. 362–86.

¹⁰ Thomas Riis, *Les institutions politiques centrales du Danemark 1100–1332* (Odense, 1977), pp. 323–36; Niels Skyum-Nielsen, 'Estonia under Danish Rule', in *Danish Medieval History: New Currents*, ed. Niels Skyum-Nielsen and Niels Lund (Copenhagen, 1981), pp. 112–36.

¹¹ Thomas Riis, 'Der polnisch-dänische Vertrag 1419 und die Vormachtstellung im Ostseegebiet', in *Studien zur Geschichte des Ostseeraumes*, vol. 1, ed. Thomas Riis (Odense, 1995), pp. 67–78; Klaus Neitmann, 'Der Deutsche Orden und die Revaler Bischofserhebungen im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert', in *Reval. Handel und Wandel vom 13. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert*, ed. Norbert Angermann and Wilhelm Lenz (Lüneburg, 1997), pp. 43–86 (here 56–72); Anti Selart, 'Die Kreuzzüge in Livland Mitte des 13. Jahrhunderts und das dänische Königshaus', in *Narva und die Ostseeregion. Beiträge der II. Internationalen Konferenz über die politischen und kulturellen Beziehungen zwischen Russland und der Ostseeregion*, ed. Karsten Brüggemann (Narva, 2004), pp. 125–37; Jens E. Olesen, 'Nordosteuropa in der Zeit der Kalmarer Union. Dänische Versuche zur Revindikation Estlands', in *Nordosteuropa als Geschichtsregion. Beiträge des III. Internationalen Symposiums zur deutschen Kultur und Geschichte im europäischen Nordosten*, ed. Jörg Hackmann and Robert Schweitzer (Helsinki and Lübeck, 2006), pp. 223–40 (here 227); Hain Rebas, 'The Post-Scriptum of Danish Estonia', in *Von Menschen, Ländern, Meeren. Festschrift für Thomas Riis zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Gerhard Fouquet et al. (Tönning, 2006), pp. 19–35; Mikael Kristian Hansen, 'Die Kalmarer Union und der Deutsche Orden 1410–1423: Die Estlandfrage', *Forschungen zur baltischen Geschichte* 4 (2009), 11–39.

or less marginal with regard to the mainstream politics of Livonia. With respect to ecclesiastical policy, the archbishopric of Livonia, Estonia and Prussia (alias the archbishopric of Riga), which was established during 1245–46,¹² created a new situation in north-eastern Europe in comparison with the beginning of the thirteenth century. On one hand, the Teutonic Order and the Rigan archbishop inherited respectively the roles and rights of the Order of the Sword Brethren and that of the bishop of Riga; on the other hand, they were new forces who also wished to play a new role in the region. The 1237 Papal Bull on the uniting of orders prescribed that the Teutonic knights in Livonia would have to remain, as they had formerly been in the case of the Sword Brethren, under the jurisdiction of their bishops.¹³ In later interpretations, the archbishop's claim in the fourteenth century extended as far as to the role of a feudal seignior over the order,¹⁴ whereas the Teutonic Order, in turn, applied for political subordination of Livonian bishoprics and the incorporation of cathedral chapters into their order.¹⁵ Irrespective of the nearly constant suits to the pope and the emperor,¹⁶ neither of the parties managed to achieve persistent and unequivocal success. The Teutonic Order and the Rigan archbishop additionally competed for seigniorial rights regarding the town of Riga, with impermanent success.¹⁷

¹² Kurt Forstreuter, 'Die Gründung des Erzbistums Preussen 1245/1246', *Jahrbuch der Albertus-Universität zu Königsberg/Pr.* 10 (1960), 9–31.

¹³ LUB 1/1, no. 149.

¹⁴ Manfred Hellmann, 'Der Deutsche Orden im politischen Gefüge Altlivlands', *ZfO* 40 (1991), 481–99; Bernhart Jähnig, 'Rechtsgrundlagen der Deutschordensherrschaft in Livland', *Zapiski Historyczne* 57 (1992), 547–63; Bernhart Jähnig, 'Der Kampf des Deutschen Ordens um die Schutzherrschaft über die livländischen Bistümer', in *Ritterorden und Kirche im Mittelalter*, ed. Zenon Hubert Nowak (Toruń, 1997), pp. 97–111; Bernhart Jähnig, 'Der Deutsche Orden und die livländischen Bischöfe im Spannungsfeld von Kaiser und Papst', *Nordost-Archiv. Zeitschrift für Regionalgeschichte* 7/1 (1998), 47–63; Bernhart Jähnig, 'Das Ringen zwischen Deutschem Orden und bischöflicher Gewalt in Livland und Preußen', *Römische Quartalschrift für christliche Altertumskunde und Kirchengeschichte* 97 (2002), 215–37.

¹⁵ Mario Glauert, 'Die Bindung des Domkapitels von Riga an die Regel des Deutschen Ordens', in *Die Domkapitel des Deutschen Ordens in Preußen und Livland*, ed. Radosław Biskup and Mario Glauert (Münster, 2004), pp. 269–316.

¹⁶ Manfred Hellmann, *Livland und das Reich. Das Problem ihrer gegenseitigen Beziehungen* (Munich, 1989); Dietmar Willoweit, 'Livland, das Reich und das Rechtsdenken des Mittelalters', in *Juristen werden Herren uferden. Recht–Geschichte–Philologie. Kolloquium zum 60. Geburtstag von Friedrich Ebel*, ed. Andreas Fijal et al. (Göttingen, 2006), pp. 179–88.

¹⁷ Gert Kroeger, 'Erzbischof Silvester Stodewescher und sein Kampf mit dem Orden um die Herrschaft über Riga', *Mitteilungen aus der livländischen Geschichte* 24 (1930), 147–280; Manfred Hellmann, 'Der Deutsche Orden und die Stadt Riga', in *Stadt und Orden. Das*

This is the main background for history writing and the use of historic arguments in medieval Livonia. The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia retouches the reciprocal contradictions of Rigan crusaders.¹⁸ As such, Henry's chronicle frequently happened to be irrelevant and thus unusable as a repository of arguments for the internal conflicts that were topical in late medieval Livonia. The historical tradition represented by Henry's chronicle was far from being the only one in Livonia even as early as during the thirteenth century, even if it is difficult to ascertain the mutual relationships between the chronicle and the other writings.¹⁹ For example, a chronologically relatively close text to Henry's chronicle, that of *Descriptiones terrarum*, a brief description of Eastern and Northern Europe, dating from the middle of the thirteenth century, contains a tale some sentences long concerning the arrival of merchants on the River Düna (Latv. Daugava, Est. Väina, Russ. Dvina), the castle established by them there, and the attempt of local people to drag the stone fortification down with the help of ropes.²⁰ As such, there are great similarities, in general terms, with the equivalent episode in Henry's chronicle.²¹ Nevertheless, the use of the chronicle as a primary source cannot be proved by this, since the story in question

Verhältnis des Deutschen Ordens zu den Städten in Livland, Preußen und im Deutschen Reich, ed. Udo Arnold (Marburg, 1993), pp. 1–33.

¹⁸ For example, LUB 1/1, nos 16–18, 23, cf. HCL XI.3, pp. 48–50; XIV.13, p. 87; Friedrich Benninghoven, *Der Orden der Schwertbrüder. Fratres milicie Christi de Livonia* (Cologne, 1965), pp. 113–18; Angermann, 'Die mittelalterliche Chronistik', p. 9; Barbara Bombi, 'I procuratori dell'Ordine Teutonico tra il XIII e XIV secolo', *Römische Historische Mitteilungen* 44 (2002), 193–297 (here 264–5).

¹⁹ Leonid Arbusow, 'Zeitgenössische Parallelberichte zum "Chronicon Livoniae" Heinrichs von Lettland', *Õpetatud Eesti Seltsi Toimetused* 30 (1938), 40–47; Leonid Arbusow, 'Die mittelalterliche Schriftüberlieferung als Quelle für die Frühgeschichte der ostbaltischen Völker', in *Baltische Lande*, vol. 1: 'Ostbaltische Frühzeit', ed. Albert Brackmann and Carl Engel (Leipzig, 1939), pp. 167–203, 496. See also Konstantin Höhlbaum, 'Beiträge zur Quellenkunde Alt-Livlands', *Verhandlungen der gelehrten Estnischen Gesellschaft zu Dorpat* 7/3–4 (1873), 21–77 (here 56–7, 74–5); *Altlivlands Rechtsbücher zum Theil nach bisher unbenutzten Texten*, ed. Friedrich Georg von Bunge (Leipzig, 1879), p. 55; Hermann von Bruiningk, 'Die Frage der Verehrung der ersten livländischen Bischöfe als Heilige', *Sitzungsberichte der Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Alterthumskunde der Ostseeprovinzen Russlands aus dem Jahre 1902* (Riga, 1903), pp. 3–36 (here 16–20).

²⁰ Marvin L. Colker, 'America Rediscovered in the Thirteenth Century?', *Speculum* 54 (1979), 712–26 (here 723); Anti Selart, 'Die Bettelmönche im Ostseeraum zur Zeit des Erzbischofs Albert Suerbeer von Riga (Mitte des 13. Jahrhunderts)', *ZfO* 57 (2007), 475–99 (here 495–7). See also Franz Nyenstädt, 'Livländische Chronik nebst dessen Handbuch', in *Monumenta Livoniae antiquae*, ed. Gotthard Tieleman, vol. 2 (Riga, 1839), pp. 1–166 (here 9).

²¹ HCL I.2, p. 2; I.6, p. 3.

evidently seems to be a narrative that existed in the local tradition and could at least partially relate to the motifs of folklore.²²

The *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle*,²³ probably written during the 1290s, was a vernacular chivalric narrative about Livonian history, representing the tradition of the Teutonic Order. In creating the image of the past in Livonia, the *Rhymed Chronicle* was more influential during the medieval period than Henry's chronicle was. The relevant part of the *Rhymed Chronicle*, relatively inaccurate in factual terms, led to a completely different interpretation of events at the beginning of the thirteenth century than that of Henry's account. The possibility that the author of the *Rhymed Chronicle* knew the earlier Latin chronicle and modified its rather bishop-centred narration into one focusing on the order cannot be ruled out.²⁴ Similarities between the *Rhymed Chronicle* and Henry's chronicle can primarily be noticed within the material in the first chapters of Henry's chronicle.²⁵

Several historians have surmised that Hermann of Wartberge, the chaplain of the Livonian Master of the Teutonic Order in the fourteenth century, possibly used Henry's chronicle when compiling his Latin *Livonian Chronicle*, which goes as far as 1378.²⁶ Hermann combined more or less correct information about

²² Marek Tamm, 'Uus allikas Liivimaa ristiusustamisest. Ida-Baltikumi kirjeldus *Descriptiones terrarum*'is (u 1255)', *Keel ja Kirjandus* 44 (2001), 872–84 (here 883–4).

²³ *Livländische Reimchronik mit Anmerkungen, Namensverzeichnis und Glossar*, ed. Leo Meyer (Paderborn, 1876); Alan V. Murray, 'The Structure, Genre and Intended Audience of the Livonian Rhymed Chronicle', in CCBF, pp. 235–51.

²⁴ Cf. Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung', 15, pp. 286–7; Lutz Mackensen, 'Zur deutschen Literaturgeschichte Alt-Livlands', in *Baltische Lande*, vol. 1, pp. 385–414 (here 406–7); Lutz Mackensen, *Zur deutschen Literatur Altlivlands* (Würzburg, 1961), pp. 31–48; Evgeniya L. Nazarova, 'Дата основания Риги в контексте истории крестовых походов', *Балто-славянские исследования* 15 (2002), 29–41 (here 30, 36–9).

²⁵ HCL I.2, p. 2 – *Livländische Reimchronik*, lines 201–3, 232–5; HCL I.3, p. 2 – *Livländische Reimchronik*, lines 215–17; HCL I.6, p. 3 – *Livländische Reimchronik*, lines 223, 248; HCL II.2, pp. 8–9 – *Livländische Reimchronik*, lines 491–9; HCL II.7, pp. 10–11 – *Livländische Reimchronik*, lines 526–7; HCL V.1, pp. 15–16 – *Livländische Reimchronik*, lines 523–5; HCL VI.4, p. 18 – *Livländische Reimchronik*, lines 595–9; HCL VII.3, pp. 20–21 – *Livländische Reimchronik*, lines 304–440. Cf. also HCL VI.4, p. 18; XIV.13, p. 74 – *Livländische Reimchronik*, lines 595–606, 619–22; HCL XIII.2, p. 67 – *Livländische Reimchronik*, lines 687–758.

²⁶ For example, Hermann de Wartberge, 'Chronicon Livoniae', ed. Ernst Strehlke, in *Scriptores rerum prussicarum. Die Geschichtsschreiber der preussischen Vorzeit*, ed. Theodor Hirsch et al., vol. 2 (Leipzig, 1863), pp. 9–178, 802–3 (here 15); Paul Ecke, *Die livländische Reimchronik*, PhD dissertation, Greifswald (Greifswald, 1910), p. 10; Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung', 15, pp. 288–9; Odilo Engels, 'Zur Historiographie des Deutschen Ordens im Mittelalter', *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 48 (1966), 336–63 (here

the beginnings of Livonia with the different, earlier fictional chronology of the *Rhymed Chronicle*. As a result, some figures in Livonian history, like Bishop Albert of Riga (r. 1199–1229), became doubled in his narrative. The goal of Wartberge's chronicle was to demonstrate the privileges of the Teutonic Order in Livonia and to prove the order's precedence over the archbishop of Riga. For instance, if, according to Henry, the town of Riga was established by the bishop, then Wartberge claims that this was done jointly by the Sword Brethren and the crusaders.²⁷ Again, the similarities between the two chronicles occur solely within the extent of the first chapters of Henry's chronicle.²⁸ Wartberge's chronicle, 'aiming at briefness,'²⁹ simply passes by the events dealt with within the main part of the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia. Taking this detail into consideration, it seems likely that instead of Henry's chronicle, Chaplain Hermann used a description of the outset of the Livonian mission which was also used as a source by the author of Henry's chronicle and maybe also by the author of the *Rhymed Chronicle*. It has apparently been repeatedly presumed that the initial part of Henry's chronicle relies on an earlier chronicle or annal-like text, unknown today.³⁰

The institutional tradition of history writing in Livonia did not only emerge in the Teutonic Order but also from the Rigan archbishop and the cathedral chapter. Their records are primarily the places to look for traces of knowledge and utilization of Henry's chronicle. However, regarding the fourteenth century, this tradition has been preserved in too much of a fragmented manner for the impact of Henry's chronicle to be assessed here.³¹ Also, only

343); Udo Arnold, 'Hermann von Wartberge', in *Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters. Verfasserlexikon*, ed. Kurt Ruh et al. (Berlin, 1981), pp. 1114–15.

²⁷ Wartberge 'Chronicon Livoniae', p. 25.

²⁸ Wartberge 'Chronicon Livoniae', pp. 21–5, 28. See also HCL I.2, p. 2; I.3, p. 2; I.6, p. 3; I.8, p. 4; V.1, pp. 15–16; VI.4, p. 18. See also HCL XI.3, pp. 48–50; XIII.2, pp. 67–8; Anti Selart, 'Die livländische Chronik des Hermann von Wartberge' in *Geschichtsschreibung im mittelalterlichen Livland*, ed. Matthias Thumser (forthcoming).

²⁹ Wartberge 'Chronicon Livoniae', p. 29: '... quas causas brevitatis obmitto.'

³⁰ See Leonid Arbusow, 'Das entlehnte Sprachgut in Heinrichs "Chronicon Livoniae". Ein Beitrag zur Sprache mittelalterlicher Chronistik', *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 8 (1951), 100–153 (here 145); Paul Johansen, 'Die Chronik als Biographie. Heinrich von Lettlands Lebensgang und Weltanschauung', *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, n.s. 1 (1953), 1–24 (here 5); Bauer, 'Einleitung', pp. XXVI–XXVII; Anti Selart, 'Iam tunc ...', pp. 203–4. See also Friedrich Wachtsmuth, *Ueber die Quellen und den Verfasser der ältern livländischen Reimchronik*. Separatabdruck aus der Einladungsschrift zum Redeaet im Gymnasium zu Mitau (Mitau, 1878), pp. 7–9, 20–21.

³¹ LUB 1/3, no. 1094; 'Fortgesetzte Mittheilung kurzgefaßter alter Chroniken', *Archiv für die Geschichte Liv-, Esth- und Curlands* 5 (1847), 172–86 (here 174–80); Bartholomäus

limited information about Livonian chronicles of the fifteenth century exists. The Rigan Canon Dietrich Nagel (d. 1468/69)³² perhaps devised a Latin chronicle of Rigan archbishops, which later disappeared.³³ The chronicle of the Rigan town council member Hermann Helewegh (d. 1489) has been preserved only in a later rewritten version.³⁴ Yet the activity of Dietrich Nagel,

Grefenthal, 'Chronicon Livoniae', ed. Friedrich Georg von Bunge, in *Monumenta Livoniae antiquae*, vol. 5 (Riga, 1847), pp. I–X, 1–123 (here 1–4). See also Georg Rathlef, 'Das Verhältnis der kleinen Meisterchronik zum Chronicon Livoniae Hermanns von Wartberge und zur Reimchronik', *Verhandlungen der gelehrten Estnischen Gesellschaft zu Dorpat* 8/2 (1875–77), 27–84 (here 29–33, 41–3).

³² Brigide Schwarz, 'Prälaten aus Hannover im spätmittelalterlichen Livland: Dietrich Nagel, Dompropst von Riga († Ende 1468/Anfang 1469), und Ludolf Nagel, Domdekan von Ösel, Verweser von Reval († nach 1477)', *ZfO* 49 (2000), 495–532 (here 500–518); Brigide Schwarz, 'Eine "Seilschaft" von Klerikern aus Hannover im Spätmittelalter', *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken* 81 (2001), 256–77 (here 261–2).

³³ It is not clear whether the Chronicle of Nagel mentioned in the eighteenth century was a real chronicle unknown today, or merely his short historical treatise (see below) being described as a chronicle. See Georg Berkholz, '[Vortrag]', in *Sitzungsberichte der Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Alterthumskunde der Ostseeprovinzen Russlands aus dem Jahre 1873* (Riga, 1874), pp. 69–80 (here 74–7); Constantin Mettig, 'Die Chronik des rigaschen Domherrn Nagel', in *Sitzungsberichte der Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Alterthumskunde der Ostseeprovinzen Russlands aus dem Jahr 1885* (Riga, 1886), pp. 37–43; Nicolaus Busch, 'Zu den von H. Baron Bruiningk vorgelegten livländischen Urkunden', in *Sitzungsberichte der Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Alterthumskunde der Ostseeprovinzen Russlands aus dem Jahre 1897* (Riga, 1898), pp. 162–4; Angermann, 'Die mittelalterliche Chronistik', p. 17; Paul Johansen, *Balthasar Rüssow als Humanist und Geschichtsschreiber*, ed. Heinz von zur Mühlen (Cologne, 1996), p. 202; Sulev Vahtre, 'Balti kroonikate käsikirjadest Peterburi raamatukogudes', in *Õpetatud Eesti Seltsi aastaraamat 2002* (Tartu, 2004), pp. 297–306 (here 297–301).

³⁴ 'Das rothe Buch inter archiepiscopalia', ed. Wilhelm Brachmann, in *Scriptores rerum Livonicarum. Sammlung der wichtigsten Chroniken und Geschichtsdenkmale von Liv-, Ehst- und Kurland*, vol. 2 (Riga, 1848), pp. 729–804 (here 742); Georg Berkholz, 'Ueber Joh. Witte's Originalhandschrift des rothen Buches inter archiepiscopalia', in *Sitzungsberichte der Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Alterthumskunde der Ostseeprovinzen Russlands aus dem Jahre 1874* (Riga, 1875), pp. 8–11; Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung', 16, pp. 174–92; Johansen, *Balthasar Rüssow*, pp. 47–8; Thomas Brück, 'Hermann Helewegh. Ratsekretär und Ratsherr in Riga im Spannungsfeld zwischen Stadt und Stadtherren im 15. Jahrhundert', in *Akteure und Geener der Hanse. Zur Prosopographie der Hansezeit*, ed. Detlef Kattinger and Horst Wernicke (Weimar, 1998), pp. 145–63; Thomas Brück, 'Rigaer Chronistik im 17. Jahrhundert. Johann Witte und seine Bearbeitung der Chronik des Hermann Helewegh', in *Editionswissenschaftliche Kolloquien 2003/2004. Historiographie. Briefe und Korrespondenzen. Editorische Methoden*, ed. Matthias Thumser and Janusz Tandecki (Toruń, 2005), pp. 143–68.

as a representative of the church of Riga in the struggle against the Teutonic Order, holds a significant place in the reception history of Henry's chronicle.

The conflict over who was entitled to exercise controlling power in Livonia thus extended back into history: to the question of who held the priority during the time of the conquest of the land, Christianization and the foundation of towns and castles. However, this was chiefly a legal conflict in which charters were of greater significance than chronicles. Besides, the vehement nature of the war between the Teutonic Order and the church and town of Riga at the turn of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries actually to some extent outshone the earlier events. Thus, during the later disputes, references were relatively seldom made to the beginning of the thirteenth century, the period described in Henry's chronicle. Regarding earlier periods, only the legislative orders of the papal legate William of Modena (d. 1251; in Livonia 1225–26, 1234–35, 1237–38) were mentioned fairly often in these disputes.³⁵ Still, when the Teutonic Order claimed in 1353 that the town of Riga had never belonged to the Rigan church and archbishop, but instead to the Roman Empire,³⁶ the supporters of the archbishop counterclaimed that the first military order in Livonia, that of the Sword Brethren, was established by the Livonian prelates and its domains were donated from among the property of the church. In more general terms, this image of history actually corresponds with the one to be gained from Henry's chronicle,³⁷ which must therefore have been common knowledge in the party of the Rigan church. The subsequent amalgamation of the Sword Brethren with the Teutonic Order had happened, according to the archbishop's side, on condition that *obedientia, reverentia et subiectio* of the order in front of the church would be maintained.³⁸ Sometime before 1360, the party of the Rigan church presented the Papal Curia with a *libellus* containing their arguments.³⁹

³⁵ Cf. *Das Zeugenverhör des Franciscus de Moliano (1312). Quellen zur Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens*, ed. August Seraphim (Königsberg, 1912), pp. 21, §181; 163, §3; 201, §230, 232. See also LUB 1/2, no. 968, cols 629–32, 635; nos 970, 975; *Akten und Rezesse der livländischen Ständetage*, 3 vols, ed. Oskar Stavenhagen and Leonid Arbusow (Riga, 1907–38), vol. 1, no. 580, p. 630; *Die Berichte der Generalprokuratoren des Deutschen Ordens an der Kurie*, 4 vols, ed. Kurt Forstreuter (Göttingen and Cologne, 1961–2006), vol. 1, no. 210.

³⁶ LUB 1/2, no. 948 col. 569. Cf. Leonid Arbusow, 'III. Römischer Arbeitsbericht', *Latvijas Universitātes Raksti. Filoloģijas un filosofijas fakultātes serija* 1 (1929), 65–160 (here 96–7); *Die Berichte der Generalprokuratoren*, vol. 1, no. 112, pp. 249–50.

³⁷ HCL VI.4, p. 18; XI.3, pp. 49–50.

³⁸ LUB 1/2, no. 948, col. 571.

³⁹ LUB 1/2, no. 970, cols 647–9.

In 1391, the archbishop of Riga, together with some of his canons, fled to Lübeck where he instituted a propaganda campaign against the Teutonic Order.⁴⁰ The order, in turn, responded with historical arguments evidently originating from the chronicle of Hermann of Wartberge.⁴¹ The proctor of the Teutonic Order at the Papal Curia had at his disposal a large collection of documents also used as evidence in litigation concerning Livonia.⁴² When necessary, more documents were demanded from Livonia.⁴³ The 1429 inventory of the house of the proctor of the Teutonic Order also mentions, among other matters, writings and volumes related to the proceedings of the order, but not the chronicles of Prussia or Livonia.⁴⁴ However, the chronicles were actually referred to during the disputes. In 1424, the representative of the Teutonic Order again submitted his arguments against the Rigan camp *ut desuper cronice conscripte testantur*. The chronicle utilized was Wartberge's.⁴⁵

In 1434, at the Council of Basel, the archbishop's party, represented by Canon Dietrich Nagel, presented its account of the Teutonic Order's violence against the Rigan church up until 1432.⁴⁶ In his argumentation, Nagel relied on charters and on an earlier claim by the church of Riga, dating from the middle of the fourteenth century, against the Teutonic Order.⁴⁷ Johann von Reve, the representative of the Livonian Master of the Teutonic Order in Basel, wished to provide his own reply to Nagel's *libellus articulorum*,⁴⁸ presenting *die cronica von*

⁴⁰ Hartmut Boockmann, *Johannes Falkenberg, der Deutsche Orden und die polnische Politik. Untersuchungen zur politischen Theorie des späteren Mittelalters* (Göttingen, 1975), pp. 63–4. See also LUB 1/3, nos 1313, 1322.

⁴¹ *Die Berichte der Generalprokuratoren*, vol. 1, no 210, p. 321; see also nos 211, 212. See also Paul Girgensohn, 'Die Inkorporationspolitik des Deutschen Ordens in Livland 1378–1397', *Mitteilungen aus dem Gebiete der Geschichte Liv-, Est- und Kurlands* 20 (1910), 1–86 (here 28–41).

⁴² LUB 1/10, no. 208, pp. 138–9, no. 213, p. 144; *Die Berichte der Generalprokuratoren* vol. 2, no. 61, p. 128. See also Bombi, 'I procuratori dell'Ordine Teutonico'.

⁴³ *Die Berichte der Generalprokuratoren*, vol. 3/2, no. 222, p. 453, vol. 4/1, no. 93, p. 142; cf. LUB 1/8, no. 188.

⁴⁴ LUB 1/8, no. 1, pp. 3–4; *Die Berichte der Generalprokuratoren*, vol. 4/1, no. 20, pp. 56–8, no. 31, p. 74.

⁴⁵ LUB 1/7, no. 78, p. 60; cf. Wartberge 'Chronicon Livoniae', pp. 21–7.

⁴⁶ MS Greifswald, Bibliothek des Geistlichen Ministeriums bei der Domgemeinde St Nikolai, Mscr. 23.C.vi, fols 113r–22v (here 113r–v). See also LUB 1/8, no. 852, p. 496; Henrike Bolte, 'Der Greifswalder Jurist Johann Meilof und seine livländische Urkundensammlung', *Jahrbuch für die Geschichte Mittel- und Ostdeutschlands* 52/2006 (2007), 227–62 (here 253–60).

⁴⁷ LUB 1/3, no. 948 col. 571; Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung', 15, p. 295.

⁴⁸ LUB 1/8, no. 945, §5, p. 563; Levans, 'Die lebendigen Toten', pp. 28–31.

Liefflant ('the Livonian chronicle') to the council. Other representatives of the order, however, discouraged this attempt, saying *sie gancz widdir uns tut* ('this would be detrimental for us').⁴⁹ Leonid Arbusow has asked whether Johann von Reve could at this point have been thinking about Henry's chronicle, since other chronicles that could have been consulted, the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* and the chronicle of Wartberge, were more favourably inclined towards the order.⁵⁰ It is more likely that the discouragement was not related to the content of a specific chronicle unfavourable for the order, but instead to the general potentially detrimental impact of operating in a legal dispute on the basis of a chronicle. And indeed, it is hardly possible that the stylistically very simple chronicle of Wartberge, for instance, would have left a good impression in the learned atmosphere of Basel. The new anti-order overview of the history of the Rigan church was composed by Dietrich Nagel in 1454 in Livonia, also almost definitely on this occasion using the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia, in addition to several charters.⁵¹ Yet the writing also shows traces of the historical tradition of the Rigan church, which can be distinguished from that of Henry's chronicle.⁵²

⁴⁹ LUB 1/8, no. 871, p. 513; *Die Berichte der Generalprokuratoren*, vol. 4/2, no. 654.

⁵⁰ Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung', 15, pp. 294–5.

⁵¹ Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung', 15, pp. 295–6; Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung', 16, p. 128, cf. p. 178; Levans, 'Die lebendigen Toten', pp. 9–11, 14–15, 29. See also 'Umständlicher Bericht den der Herr Meister und ganze Orden mit dem Adel und Städten wegen der schlechten Aufführung des Erzbischofs Silvesters, an den Pabst zu Rom und an das Collegium Cardinalium gelangen lassen', in *Gelebte Beyträge zu den Rigischen Anzeigen aufs Jahr 1765* (Riga, 1765), part 16–20, pp. 125–60; 'Historische Darstellung der durch die Schuld des Erzbischofs Silvester entstandenen Uneinigkeit zwischen ihm und dem Orden in Livland während des Bundes in Preußen, um's Jahr 1450 u.s.f.', ed. Carl E. Napiersky, *Archiv für die Geschichte Liv-, Ehst- und Curlands* 7 (1854), 151–84; Matthias Thumser, 'Geschichte schreiben als Anklage. Der Weissensteiner Rezess (1478) und der Konflikt um das Erzstift Riga', *Jahrbuch für die Geschichte Mittel- und Ostdeutschlands* 51/2005 (2006), 63–75.

⁵² *Akten und Rezesse*, vol. 1, no. 573, pp. 598–9. See also HCL I.12, pp. 6–7; XIX.7, pp. 131–2; XXXIX.9, p. 215; 'Chronica episcoporum Rigensium', *Archiv für die Geschichte Liv-, Esth- und Curlands* 5 (1847), 174–80 (here 174). There are also some stories about the beginnings of Livonia from the sixteenth century; it is not certain, however, whether they represent a tradition independent from Henry, or are just late scholarly elaborations. See Nyenstädt, 'Livländische Chronik', pp. 10–23; Georg Berkholz, 'Ueber die livländische Entdeckungssage', in *Sitzungsberichte der Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Alterthumskunde der Ostseeprovinzen Russlands aus dem Jahre 1874* (Riga, 1875), pp. 13–23, 48–53; Paul Johansen, 'Die Legende von der Aufseglung Livlands durch Bremer Kaufleute', in *Europa und Übersee. Festschrift für Egmont Zechlin*, ed. Otto Brunner and Dietrich Gerhard (Hamburg, 1961), pp. 42–68 (here 53–6); Arved von Taube, '"Der Untergang der livländischen Selbständigkeit": Die livländische Chronistik des 16. Jahrhunderts', in *Geschichte der deutschbaltischen*

During the fifteenth century, there were other references to local chronicles in Livonia.⁵³ It might be that there was a certain intrinsic tradition of history writing in the Ösel bishopric; this does not, however, have to be connected with Henry's chronicle.⁵⁴ Kaspar Schuwenpflug, the bishop of Ösel (r. 1420–23), who happened to be staying in Italy at the time, mentioned in a letter from 1423 written to the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order, some unidentified chronicles which contained writings about the early history of Livonia.⁵⁵ By the end of the fourteenth century at the latest, an opposing tradition existed in Curonia, according to which the emergence of the Curonian bishopric was not the work of the Teutonic Knights, but instead of the Danish kings, and this long before the Teutonic Order started to operate in Curonia. According to a manuscript entitled *Libellus gestorum* in 1431, the Danish King Abel, son of Valdemar, conquered the Palanga stronghold on the day of St Vitus (15 June) in 1161 (or 1162) and thereafter beat the Curonians on St John's Day (24 June). After this, he appointed the bishop, Lund's Canon Ernemordus, who was confirmed by the pope in 1169. It was only Hermann, the second bishop of Curonia, who invited the Sword Brethren to Curonia in 1183.⁵⁶ This narrative seems to be a scholarly falsification mingling different traditions originating from Livonia and supposedly also from Denmark. The question is whether this reflects the narrative in Henry's chronicle, which recounts the military campaign of King Valdemar II of Denmark to Reval (Est. Tallinn) in 1219.⁵⁷ According to

Geschichtsschreibung, ed. Georg von Rauch (Cologne and Vienna, 1986), pp. 21–41 (here 36); Lydia Niehoff, 'Bremer Bier im Baltikum? Eine Suche nach Bremer Brauprodukten im Ostseeraum', *Bremisches Jahrbuch* 80 (2001), 51–73 (here 52–5).

⁵³ For example, *Akten und Rezesse*, vol. 1, no. 550. See Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung', 15, pp. 292–4.

⁵⁴ See Johansen, *Balthasar Rüssow*, pp. 40–47.

⁵⁵ LUB 1/5, no. 2709, cols 997–8.

⁵⁶ LUB 1/8, no. 440, pp. 255, 257–60; 'Narratio de Episcopatu Curoniensi ejusque origine Danica circa 1250', in *Scriptores rerum Danicarum medii aevi*, ed. Jacob Langebek, 9 vols (Hauniae, 1772–1878), vol. 5, pp. 572–4; Heinrich Diederichs, 'Ein altes Verzeichnis der Bischöfe von Kurland', *Mittheilungen aus der livländischen Geschichte* 13 (1884), 245–52 (here 249–50); 'Notae de episcopate Curonensi', ed. Georg Waitz, in *Monumenta Germaniae historica. Scriptores in Folio*, vol. 29 (Hanover, 1892), p. 246; Edgar Anderson, 'Early Danish Missionaries in the Baltic Countries', in *Gli inizi del cristianesimo in Livonia-Lettonia*, ed. Michele Maccarrone (Vatican City, 1989), pp. 245–75 (here 261). In one of the versions, the date of the invitation of the Teutonic Knights (1243) is added, which is not very far from the real date of the introduction of the order in Curonia. Cf. LUB 1/9, no. 358, p. 241. Evermodus was the name of the first bishop of Ratzeburg (1154–78).

⁵⁷ See LUB 1/8, no. 440, p. 255; Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung', 15, pp. 290–92; Bauer, 'Einleitung', p. xxxvii; Angermann, 'Die mittelalterliche Chronistik', p. 16; Anti Selart, 'Balduin von Alna, Dänemark und Rußland. Zur politischen Geschichte

the sixteenth-century Danish Franciscan Peder Olsen, the battle at Reval had indeed taken place on June 15.⁵⁸ Yet as the date of the battle of Reval is absent in Henry's chronicle,⁵⁹ and 15 June (the day of the capture of the Arkona castle, Rügen, in 1168/69) and 25 June (St Knut Lavard's Day) are instead the key dates in Danish crusading tradition, it is probable that the Curonian tradition, with regard to Henry's chronicle, was an independent one.

As authoritativeness and precedence, in medieval thinking, depended on age among other issues, the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia was inevitably discarded, as the tradition of the Teutonic Order dated the establishment of Christian Livonia as earlier, thus depriving Henry's narrative of authority. The *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* positioned the founding of the Rigan bishopric in the year 1143.⁶⁰ Silvester, the archbishop of Riga, confirmed in 1452 that Bishop Albert had founded the town of Riga 60 years prior to the time the Teutonic Order was established in Acre.⁶¹ By comparison, the narrative about the Curonian Bishop Ernemordus also accentuated the chronologically secondary position of the Teutonic Order in Curonia.

The medieval history of chronicle writing in Livonia was a 'struggle for history', not only figuratively but also in the very direct sense. At the end of the fourteenth century, the Rigan archbishop blamed the Teutonic Order for having taken books from the cathedral library in Riga to the order castle in Riga. The order, in turn, did not deny the incident, and justified the deed with a need to keep these *falsas litteras* at the order's disposal so that the books would not be sold *per adversarios, sic quod cum pecuniis illis iustitiam nostram pervertant*.⁶² In 1416, the archbishop was aware of the fact that the Teutonic Order had intruded into the library of the Chapter of Riga and 'had taken away the best privileges and burnt them' (*ire besten privilegia genomen unde vorbrandt habe*).⁶³ True, certain charters of the Rigan church did indeed temporarily fall

Livlands in den 1230er Jahren', in *The Reception of Medieval Europe in the Baltic Sea Region*, ed. Jörn Staecker (Visby, 2009), pp. 59–74.

⁵⁸ *Scriptores minores historiae Danicae medii aevi*, ed. Martin Cl. Gertz, 2 vols (Copenhagen, 1918–22), vol. 1, p. 459.

⁵⁹ HCL XXIII.2, pp. 154–6, Brundage, pp. 173–4.

⁶⁰ *Livländische Reimchronik*, lines 430–32; Nazarova, 'Дата основания Риги', pp. 29–41; cf. Helen Nicholson, *Templars, Hospitallers and Teutonic Knights: Images of the Military Orders, 1128–1291* (Leicester, 1993), pp. 112–26.

⁶¹ *Akten und Rezesse*, vol. 1, no. 543, p. 524.

⁶² LUB 1/3, nos 1307, 1327, 1334; *Die Berichte der Generalprokuratoren*, vol. 1, no. 221, p. 335. Cf. Arno Mentzel-Reuters, *Arma spiritualia. Bibliotheken, Bücher und Bildung im Deutschen Orden* (Wiesbaden, 2003), pp. 295–7.

⁶³ *Die Berichte der Generalprokuratoren*, vol. 2, no. 159, p. 328.

into the hands of the Teutonic Order.⁶⁴ Thus, later, when the opponents of the order claimed that the order had stolen all the privileges from the church of Riga,⁶⁵ it was not necessarily meant merely as rhetorical imagery. To be on the safe side, the archbishopric of Riga deposited its more significant charters in Lübeck in 1438–39 to be preserved there.⁶⁶ However, again the Teutonic Order was accused of destroying the privileges of the church of Riga and of *Livoniae Annales* when they conquered the Rigan archbishop's Kokenhusen (Latv. Koknese) castle in 1479.⁶⁷

The reception of the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia and of chronicle writing in general in late medieval Livonia is thus a good depiction of the pragmatic side of medieval historiography: history writing emerged during 'crisis periods', that is, during times of legitimization deficiency, and its practical value was primarily to be a collection of fixed arguments, a treasury of potential evidence and *exempla*.⁶⁸ This was true both with regard to the historiography of the

⁶⁴ *Die Berichte der Generalprokuratoren*, vol. 4/1, no. 136, p. 181; cf. nos 126, 188; Jan-Erik Beuttel, *Der Generalprokurator des Deutschen Ordens an der römischen Kurie. Amt, Funktionen, personelles Umfeld und Finanzierung* (Marburg, 1999), pp. 465–6.

⁶⁵ LUB 1/8, no. 483, p. 287.

⁶⁶ Alexander Bergengrün, 'Ein Verzeichniss der nach dem Jahre 1438 dem Lübschen Domkapitel übergebenen Urkunden des Rigischen Erzstifts', *Mitteilungen aus dem Gebiete der Geschichte Liv-, Est- und Kurlands* 17 (1900), 407–62.

⁶⁷ Dionysii Fabricii, 'Livonicae historiae compendiosa series', in *Scriptores rerum livonicarum*, vol. 2 (Riga, 1848), pp. 427–510 (here 438, 460–61); Ulrich Müller, *Johann Lohmüller und seine livländische Chronik 'Warhaftig History'. Biographie des Autors, Interpretation und Edition des Werkes* (Lüneburg, 2001), p. 286. Cf. Sulev Vahtre, 'Dionysius Fabriciuse Liivimaa kroonika', *Ajalooline Ajakiri* 1 (2007), 3–21 (here 13–14).

⁶⁸ František Graus, 'Funktionen der spätmittelalterlichen Geschichtsschreibung', in *Geschichtsschreibung und Geschichtsbewusstsein im späten Mittelalter*, ed. Hans Patze (Sigmaringen, 1987), pp. 11–55 (here 42–6); Gerd Althoff, 'Causa scribendi und Darstellungsabsicht: Die Lebensbeschreibungen der Königin Mathilde und andere Beispiele', in *Litterae medii aevi. Festschrift für Johanne Autenrieth zu ihrem 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Michael Borgolte and Herrad Spilling (Sigmaringen, 1988), pp. 117–33; Gerd Althoff and Stephanie Coué, 'Pragmatische Geschichtsschreibung und Krisen', in *Pragmatische Schriftlichkeit im Mittelalter. Erscheinungsformen und Entwicklungsstufen*, ed. Hagen Keller et al. (Munich, 1992), pp. 95–107; Birgit Studt, *Fürstenhof und Geschichte. Legitimation durch Überlieferung* (Cologne, 1992), pp. 379–99; *Herkunft und Ursprung. Historische und mythische Formen der Legitimation*, ed. Peter Wunderli (Sigmaringen, 1994); Bernd Schneidmüller, 'Constructing the Past by Means of the Present: Historiographical Foundations of Medieval Institutions, Dynasties, Peoples, and Communities', in *Medieval Concepts of the Past: Ritual, Memory, Historiography*, ed. Gerd Althoff et al. (Cambridge, 2002), pp. 167–92.

Livonian bishoprics and of the Teutonic Order;⁶⁹ whereas it is noteworthy that when comparing the areas of the Teutonic Order and those of the bishoprics in Prussia and in Livonia, interest in history and chronicles seems to have been significantly deeper in Prussia, although the chronicles have presumably never had an important role in the libraries of the order itself.⁷⁰ One of the reasons for this might have been the relatively low educational level of the Teutonic Order clergy in Livonia.⁷¹ For instance, in 1417, the Livonian Master of the Teutonic Order, in his letter to the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order, asked for a scholar to be sent to him who could properly handle the documents in the dispute with the Rigan church.⁷²

The production of the preserved and hypothetical medieval copies of the chronicle may also be easily connected with the use of earlier Livonian history in political debates. The oldest and the only medieval, partially preserved, manuscript of the chronicle is the so-called *Codex Zamoscianus* from the beginning of the fourteenth century,⁷³ currently kept in the National Library of Poland (Biblioteka Narodowa), Warsaw. The copy was located in Livonia during the first half of the sixteenth century, judging by the notes found thereon, maybe in Riga or in the vicinity, and had then ended up in Poland in connection with the tempestuous events in the Baltic during the second half of the sixteenth century.⁷⁴ It was indeed at the turn of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries,

⁶⁹ Hartmut Boockmann, 'Die Geschichtsschreibung des Deutschen Ordens. Gattungsfragen und "Gebrauchssituationen"', in *Geschichtsschreibung und Geschichtsbewusstsein im späten Mittelalter*, ed. Hans Patze (Sigmaringen, 1987), pp. 447–69.

⁷⁰ Arno Mentzel-Reuters, 'Von der Ordenschronik zur Landesgeschichte – Die Herausbildung der altpreußischen Landeshistoriographie im 16. Jahrhundert', in *Kulturgeschichte Ostpreußens in der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Klaus Garber et al. (Tübingen, 2001), pp. 581–637; Ralf G. Päsler, *Deutschsprachige Sachliteratur im Preußenland bis 1500. Untersuchungen zu ihrer Überlieferung* (Cologne, 2003), pp. 55–60, 62–9, 274, 269–302; Mentzel-Reuters, *Arma spiritualia*, pp. 294–300. See also Jarosław Wenta, *Studien über die Ordensgeschichtsschreibung am Beispiel Preußens* (Toruń, 2000).

⁷¹ Ursula Vent, 'Lisandusi Saksa ordu Liivimaa haru isikkoosseisule: ordu vaimulikond 13.–15. sajandil', *Acta Historica Tallinnensia* 1 (1997), 3–19 (here 15–16).

⁷² 'haben wir faste vill bobest- und Romischs koninchleiche büllen und pryvilegen manigerleye, dar us wir uns sunder treffliche ghelarte lewte und meister nicht woll können entrichten': *Akten und Rezesse*, vol. 1 no. 224.

⁷³ *Inwentarz rękopisów biblioteki ordynacji Zamojskiej sygn. 1–2051*, ed. Barbara Kocówna and Krystyna Muszyńska (Warsaw, 1967), p. 2, no. 25.

⁷⁴ Carl Schirren, *Der Codex Zamoscianus enthaltend Capitel I–XXIII, 8 der Origines Livoniae* (Dorpat, 1865), pp. 2–5; Bauer, 'Einleitung', p. XXXIX; Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung', 15, p. 198. See also HCL, p. 1, footnotes b, e; p. 81, footnote a; p. 117, footnotes e, g; p. 148, footnote d; p. 155, footnote e; Tomasz Makowski, *Biblioteka ordynacji Zamojskiej od Jana do Jana* (Warsaw, 2005), pp. 39–53.

during the time of the writing of *Codex Zamoscianus*, when the conflict between the Teutonic Order and the archbishop and town of Riga apparently erupted into full-scale war.⁷⁵ Within the text of *Codex Zamoscianus*, at the place which mentions the ceding of a third of Livonia by the Bishop to the Sword Brethren in 1207, there is an interpolation *non bene*.⁷⁶ This might have been appended by the anti-Teutonic copyist, or it might have been a gloss in the original copy which a later scribe included in the main text. Likewise, the active disputes searching for arguments from history may also be connected with the creation of the three other, hypothetical, unpreserved copies of the chronicle dating from the end of the fourteenth century and/or from the fifteenth century, as reconstructed by Leonid Arbusow.⁷⁷ An addition referring to the death of Bishop Bertold (r. 1196–98) also indicates their origin at the church of Riga: one copy, either from the fourteenth or fifteenth century, has been supplemented with the date of Bertold's death, in the form of verse, perhaps derived from the tombstone of the bishop in the cathedral of Riga.⁷⁸ Leonid Arbusow's hypothesis that a copy of the chronicle was also owned by the Teutonic Order⁷⁹ cannot be proved. If all these hypothetical copies really existed, the question remains: who actually read them and where were they read? As stated above, we have little evidence of use being made of the chronicle in the Middle Ages.

On a wider basis, the knowledge and utilization of the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia only spread in the sixteenth century. The chronicle, or at least its opening section, was known by a Hamburg historian, Albert Krantz (d. 1517), who stayed in Livonia during 1490–91.⁸⁰ During the sixteenth century, Henry's chronicle of Livonia was already relatively widely used. The subject matter of Livonia became real in connection with new political tensions in Northern and Eastern Europe, much more extensive than the ones so far. The early modern rivalry over Livonia gave a new sense to the question 'who was first?' and now Henry could be used for proving the historical 'Germanness' of Livonia. However, the legitimization offered by Henry, largely related to the theme

⁷⁵ See Daniel Williman, *Bibliothèques ecclésiastiques au temps de la papauté d'Avignon*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1980), pp. 147–51. Archbishop Friedrich Pernstein of Riga (1304–41), who mostly resided in Avignon, collected a major library. Livonian history was represented there not with historiographic works but collections of documents, here p. 148 B, no. 8, cf. p. 150 C, nos 31, 44, 68.

⁷⁶ HCL XI.3, p. 49.

⁷⁷ Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung', 16, pp. 158–9; Bauer, 'Einleitung', p. XLVIII.

⁷⁸ HCL II.6, p. 10.

⁷⁹ Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung', 15, pp. 286–7.

⁸⁰ Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung', 15, pp. 296–301.

of crusades, quickly became outdated in the context of the Middle Ages and thus remained insufficient: competing chronicles made Livonian history older, privileges and other charters provided a more secure support in legal discussions. The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia just had to wait for its time.

Chapter 15

The *Chronicon Livoniae* in Early Modern Scholarship: From Humanist Receptions to the Gruber Edition of 1740

Stefan Donecker¹

Introduction

In 1755, the Swedish historian Arvid Moller (1674–1758) expressed his dislike for a certain ‘old, faulty, so-called Livonian chronicle, handwritten in Latin’ that had recently been printed in Germany.² The ‘unreliable text, or rather insignificant piece of scrap paper’ that aroused Moller’s scorn was none other than the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia, first published by the Hanoverian scholar Johann Daniel Gruber (c. 1686–1748) in 1740³ and translated into German by Johann Gottfried Arndt (1713–67), schoolmaster at Arensburg (Est. Kuressaare), seven years later.⁴ Moller’s disdainful remarks fit well with the attitude that preceding centuries had displayed towards the Livonian chronicle. Scholars in early modern Europe were, in general, not kind to Henry of Livonia.

It is the aim of this chapter to survey the reception of Henry’s chronicle during the early modern period – or rather the lack thereof. Even though present-day scholarship values Henry’s chronicle as an extremely important source and a worthy example of medieval historiography, we have to face the

¹ I am very grateful to Jürgen Beyer, Susan Karr and Janet Laidla for their comments and criticism.

² Arvid Moller, *Kort Beskrifning Öfwer Est- och Lifland/Jemte Undersökning om deßa Länders Inbyggjares, i synnerhet det Estniska och Finska Folckslagets Ursprung ...* (Västerås, 1755), p. 63: ‘en gammal/ felacktig/ på Latin Handskrefwen/ så kallad Lifländsk Chronica’; ‘denne opålitige skrift/ eller pluttraide pappers kladd’. Translations from Latin, German and Swedish are my own, unless otherwise specified.

³ *Origines Livoniae sacrae et civilis, seu chronicon Livonicum vetus ...*, ed. Johann Daniel Gruber (Frankfurt and Leipzig, 1740).

⁴ *Der Liefländischen Chronik Erster Theil von Liefland unter seinen ersten Bischöfen ...*, trans. Johann Gottfried Arndt (Halle, 1747).

fact that sixteenth-century humanists, seventeenth-century polyhistorians and all the other different sub-groups of early modern scholars might have thought differently. It seems that Henry's chronicle was either unknown or deliberately ignored by the majority of these writers. On the following pages, I intend to document the faint traces which Henry left on early modern scholarship, up to Gruber's first edition of his chronicle in 1740.⁵

The Manuscript Tradition

The minimal usage of Henry's chronicle in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century historiography seems, in fact, rather surprising, since most of the manuscripts of the chronicle which are known were written during this period. In his seminal study of the manuscript tradition of the *Chronicon Livoniae*, Baltic-German historian Leonid Arbusow Jr. (1882–1951) identified 16 copies, excerpts and fragments of the chronicle.⁶

The *Codex Zamoscianus*, which forms the basis of all modern editions, is the only surviving manuscript from the Middle Ages. The second oldest manuscript, the *Codex Oxenstierna* or *Codex Hanoveranus*, dates from the late sixteenth century. A considerable amount of copies were produced during the seventeenth century (including the *Codex Skodeisky*, the *Codex Knüpferi*, the manuscript at the Reval (Est. Tallinn) gymnasium, as well as the excerpt in Baron Toll's collection), with several more added during the eighteenth century. Afterwards, there was little need for handwritten manuscripts since printed editions were readily available.

It can therefore hardly be maintained that Henry and his writings were completely ignored during the early modern period. Someone was, after all, responsible for these numerous manuscripts. The compilation of the various codices was not just a process of mechanical, uninspired copying. Scholars seem to have read the chronicle, made up their mind about it and had their own interpretations of the events Henry describes – and their understanding of his chronicle is reflected in the manuscripts they left. Even the medieval *Codex Zamoscianus* shows traces of early modern use. Several sixteenth-century readers left marginal notes on the manuscript, some of which mirror

⁵ This study is particularly indebted to Leonid Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung des "Chronicon Livoniae" Heinrichs von Lettland', *Latvijas Universitātes Raksti* 15 (1926), 189–341 and 16 (1927), 125–202.

⁶ Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung' (1926), pp. 197–285.

the background and the particular interests of the commentators,⁷ while others are of a more trivial nature and do not relate to the contents of the chronicle.⁸

The most noteworthy example of independent treatment is an interpolation of the mid sixteenth century.⁹ An unknown humanist added explanations, revised the style and, on some occasions, slightly altered the contents of the chronicle. This interpolated version was, again, copied and is preserved in a sizeable number of manuscripts – designated by lower-case letters in Arbusow's model of the interrelation between the various versions of the chronicle. The non-interpolated version, which is significantly closer to Henry's original, became known only after the discovery of the *Codex Zamoscianus* in 1862. The earlier editions of 1740, 1747 and the *Scriptores rerum Livonicarum* edition of 1853 were all based on the interpolated *Codex Oxenstierna*.

Comparing the interpolated and the non-interpolated version of the chronicle,¹⁰ it becomes obvious that most of the modifications are minor changes in vocabulary and style that bring the text closer to the humanist standards of the sixteenth century. Some alterations, however, pertained to the contents of the chronicle as well:

- The interpolator adds several explanatory remarks, most likely provided for an audience that is unfamiliar with the Baltic area. He explains, for example, that the Russians are of Greek faith and that their baptism is

⁷ One of the commentators noted all the occasions when the city of Ascheraden (Latv. Aizkraukle) is mentioned in the chronicle, another was particularly focused on Dünamünde (Latv. Daugavgrīva) and the Cistercian Order while a third one seemed interested in Lithuanian and Russian affairs and added marginal notes whenever the chronicle pertains to these two countries.

⁸ For example, the bawdy verse 'Apples and berries we like to eat / with pretty virgins we like to sleep' ('Appel vnnd Berenn de ete wy gernn / By schone junckfruwenn slape wy gernn'). On the notes in the *Codex Zamoscianus*, see Carl Schirren, *Der Codex Zamoscianus, enthaltend Capitel I – XXIII, 8. der Origines Livoniae* (Dorpat, 1865), pp. 2–5.

⁹ Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung' (1926), pp. 231–85; Georg Berkholz, 'Zur Altersbestimmung der Interpolationen in der Chronik Heinrichs von Lettland', *Sitzungsberichte der Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Alterthumskunde der Ostseeprovinzen Russlands* (1874), 48–53.

¹⁰ Schirren, *Der Codex Zamoscianus*, pp. 17–62; Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung' (1926), pp. 231–8. The interpolated version of the chronicle is quoted after Hansen's edition: *Origines Livoniae sacrae et civilis: Heinrich's des Letten älteste Chronik von Livland*, ed. and trans. August Heinrich Hansen, in *Scriptores rerum Livonicarum*, vol. 1 (Riga and Leipzig, 1853), pp. 1–488, which, in turn, is based on Gruber's edition of 1740.

likewise to be considered Greek.¹¹ Strangely enough, he interprets the word 'Ba!' – the monosyllabic expression of disappointment uttered by a Lithuanian pillager when he finds the church at Treiden (Latv. Turaida) devoid of spoils – as a 'common proverb among these barbarian people'.¹²

- On several occasions, he increases the intensity of the pro-German and anti-Danish sentiments prevalent in the chronicle.¹³
- He seems to be interested in Frisia and its inhabitants, and adds additional references on this subject.¹⁴ A certain sympathy and interest for the Frisians has been noted in Henry's own text as well;¹⁵ again, the interpolator is stressing an aspect that is inherent in his original.
- The most notorious alteration is a seemingly innocent remark on the discovery of Livonia. Near the end of the chronicle, in chapter XXIX.9, the interpolator inserts a little retrospect (here indicated by square brackets): *Multa quidem et gloriosa contigerunt in Livonia tempore conversionis gentium ad fidem Jesu Christi [per annos LXVII. praeteritos, ex quibus primo inventus est a mercatoribus Bremensibus portus Livonicus]*.¹⁶ Modern editions date chapter 29 to 1226; the interpolator usually lagged behind one year, so he would have placed the chapter in 1225.¹⁷ Subtracting 67 years, one concludes that the merchants from Bremen discovered Livonia in 1158 or 1159. The interpolator most likely copied this dating, and the reference to Bremen, from Johannes Funccius's *Chronologia*

¹¹ *Origines Livoniae* (Hansen edition), XI.7, p. 118: 'Ruthenorum de Plescekowe habentium Graecorum fidem ... baptismum.' Ibid., XX.3, p. 202: 'indignati Rutheni de Plescekowe contra Ungannenses, eo quod baptismum Latinorum acceperunt, et suum, id est Graecorum, contempsunt.' The need for a precise terminology regarding Christian denominations is understandably important for post-Reformation Europe. The interpolator also corrects Henry's generic references to 'Russians and pagans'. See Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung' (1926), p. 245.

¹² *Origines Livoniae* (Hansen edition), XI.5, p. 114: 'inquit: Ba! usitatum istius barbaricae gentis proverbium.'

¹³ Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung' (1926), p. 235.

¹⁴ *Origines Livoniae* (Hansen edition), X.17, p. 110, adds Frisia to the countries visited by Bishop Albert during his recruitment journey to Germany and ibid., IX.1, p. 86 mentions a citizen of Riga named *Martinus Frise* who, in the non-interpolated version, is just called *Martinus* without any cognomen.

¹⁵ Paul Johansen, 'Die Chronik als Biographie. Heinrich von Lettlands Lebensgang und Weltanschauung', *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, n.s. 1 (1953), 1–24 (here 14), referring to HCL IV.3 p. 13; XIV.3 p. 74.

¹⁶ *Origines Livoniae* (Hansen edition), XXIX.9, p. 300.

¹⁷ Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung' (1926), p. 236.

(1552),¹⁸ which in turn relied on the *Cronike van der Duytscher Oirden* ('Chronicle of the Teutonic Order'), a late medieval Dutch text commonly known as the *Jüngere Hochmeisterchronik*.¹⁹ Although the idea of the putative discovery of Livonia in 1158/59 is considerably older than the interpolation of Henry's chronicle, neither Funccius nor the *Hochmeisterchronik* had a particular impact on the historical imagination of later generations. The reliable Henry of Livonia, however, was a different case. After the 1740 edition and the 1747 translation made the interpolated version of the chronicle widely available, Henry's supposed testimony popularized the idea that Livonia was 'discovered' in 1158/59. The so-called *Aufsegelung*, the arrival of merchant pioneers who allegedly 'opened' Livonia to German influence, developed into the founding legend of the Baltic provinces during the nineteenth century. It was likened to the discovery of America and provided pride and inspiration both to the Baltic Germans and the citizens of Bremen. The legendary *Aufsegelung* in 1158/59 was only dispelled when the publication of the non-interpolated *Codex Zamoscianus* proved that there had never been such a date in Henry's original text.²⁰

- Finally, the interpolator accidentally left in an indication of his own background: In chapter IX.13, he changed the phrasing *gens indomita ... veram lucem qui Christus est, per fidem intuetur* to *per solam fidem intuetur* – the well-known Lutheran slogan of *sola fide*, quite out of place in a thirteenth-century chronicle.²¹ This is unlikely to be an intentional addition: the interpolator, who might have been a Protestant theologian, was probably so familiar with the Protestant catchphrase that he unwittingly added the word *sola*.

Based on the various alterations, Arbusow drew up a fairly detailed profile of the anonymous interpolator: He was an educated man, well versed in humanist style and familiar with Lutheran theology, probably a pastor. His local knowledge seems to indicate that he was either a native or a resident of Riga. In addition to

¹⁸ Iohannes Funccius, *Chronologia hoc est omnium temporum et annorum ab initio mundi, usque ad hunc praesentem a nato Christo annum M.D.LII. computatio*. ... (Königsberg, 1552), fol. 150^r; Commentarii fol. V2^r–V2^v.

¹⁹ Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung' (1926), pp. 239–42; Berkholz, 'Zur Altersbestimmung der Interpolationen', pp. 50–52.

²⁰ Paul Johansen, 'Die Legende von der Aufsegelung Livlands durch Bremer Kaufleute', in *Europa und Übersee. Festschrift für Egmont Zechlin*, ed. Otto Brunner and Dietrich Gerhard (Hamburg, 1961), pp. 42–68 (here 43–4).

²¹ *Origines Livoniae* (Hansen edition), IX.13, p. 92.

his Livonian patriotism, he had a certain sympathy for Bremen and an interest in Frisia. His work on the *Chronicon Livoniae* can be dated to the years between 1550 and 1575.²² August Buchholz believed that the interpolator might have been Rutgerus Pistorius (d. 1577), a humanist poet from Riga,²³ while Paul Johansen nominated a certain Hermann von Nehmen, a more-or-less unknown Livonian student at the University of Wittenberg.²⁴ Arbusow himself did not consider the available information sufficient to ascribe the insertions to a particular person, though he argued that the interpolator most likely belonged to the clientele of the prominent nobleman and historiographer Heinrich von Tiesenhausen (c. 1520–1600).²⁵

Even though we might never be able to ascertain the identity of the interpolator, his efforts have certainly stirred emotions among scholars. Historians have denounced his ‘misdeed’²⁶ of despoiling an authentic medieval source with what he believed to be humanist erudition. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the anonymous interpolator was thoroughly despised. But even if we disapprove of his meddlesome alterations, we need to acknowledge that his work is a deliberate and conscious treatment of Henry’s chronicle, according to the standards of his time.

The manuscript tradition thus seems to indicate that people in the early modern age did know Henry, that they read Henry and that they, occasionally and somewhat presumptuously, tried to improve Henry. It is therefore quite striking that chroniclers and historiographers of the same period made hardly any use of the chronicle.²⁷ The list of early modern scholars who used the Livonian chronicle seems impressive at a first glance. Closer scrutiny, however, shows that Henry’s influence on these authors was minimal.²⁸

²² Arbusow, ‘Die handschriftliche Überlieferung’ (1926), p. 246.

²³ August Buchholtz, ‘Die Aufseglung Livlands durch die Bremer schon in einer Druckschrift aus dem Jahre 1548’, *Sitzungsberichte der Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Alterthumskunde der Ostseeprovinzen Russlands* (1876), 3–4.

²⁴ Johansen, ‘Die Legende von der Aufseglung Livlands’, pp. 50–51.

²⁵ Arbusow, ‘Die handschriftliche Überlieferung’ (1926), pp. 252–4.

²⁶ Berkholz, ‘Zur Altersbestimmung der Interpolationen’, p. 49.

²⁷ Cf. Lutz Spelge, ‘Das Rußlandbild der livländischen Chroniken des 17. Jahrhunderts’, in *Deutschland – Livland – Rußland. Ihre Beziehungen vom 15. bis zum 17. Jahrhundert. Beiträge aus dem Historischen Seminar der Universität Hamburg*, ed. Norbert Angermann (Lüneburg, 1988), pp. 175–204 (here 203).

²⁸ Arbusow, ‘Die handschriftliche Überlieferung’ (1926), pp. 296–335; Albert Bauer, ‘Einleitung’, in HCL, pp. V–LIV (here XXXVIII–XLIII). Hermann Hildebrand, *Die Chronik Heinrichs von Lettland. Ein Beitrag zu Livlands Historiographie und Geschichte* (Berlin, 1865), pp. 2–4, 145–61, provides a more optimistic evaluation of Henry’s reception; his account, however, has to be considered largely obsolete.

The Reception in Germany

The first early modern scholar to use Henry's chronicle was Albert Krantz (c. 1448–1517), the prominent Hanseatic historian and one of the most influential humanists in Northern Europe.²⁹ Krantz had some ties to Livonia: he had visited Riga, Dorpat (Est. Tartu) and Reval as a diplomatic envoy in 1490/91, and once journeyed to Italy in the company of a Livonian, a certain Johann van Loen from Dorpat.³⁰ Either during his diplomatic mission or through his travel companion, Krantz seems to have acquired some excerpts or notes from Henry's chronicle which he used in his *Vandalia* (1519). However, Krantz only makes use of the first two books of Henry's chronicle, dealing with the lives of Bishop Meinhard and Bertold.³¹ It is therefore very likely that he simply had no access to the rest of Henry's text.

Henry's chronicle was also known among the circle of scholars that surrounded Philipp Melanchthon (1497–1560) at Wittenberg.³² Melanchthon himself displayed considerable interest in Livonian matters, particularly after the outbreak of the Livonian War in 1558, which he followed closely. It is no coincidence that Livonia was first included in the revised edition of the *Chronicon Carionis*, the standard volume of Protestant historiography, which Melanchthon's son-in-law, Caspar Peucer (1525–1602), published in 1562. Peucer includes some details taken from the Livonian chronicle, as did another of Melanchthon's pupils, the Pomeranian historiographer Thomas Kantzow (c. 1505–42). But again, this is a use that is merely superficial. Peucer copied some names from the first chapter of the Livonian chronicle, while Kantzow, whose *Pomerania* dealt with the history of his native land, relied on Henry concerning the participation of Wizlaw I of Rügen (c. 1193–1249) in the Danish crusade of 1219.³³

It seems that Melanchthon and his students had to rely on some rather randomly assorted excerpts that Arbusow aptly characterized as 'useless notes' ('nichtsutzige Notata').³⁴ As the centre of Protestant erudition, Wittenberg

²⁹ Harald Bollbuck, *Geschichts- und Raummodelle bei Albert Krantz (um 1448–1517) und David Chytraeus (1530–1600). Transformationen des Diskurses im 16. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt, 2006); Ulrich Andermann, *Albert Krantz. Wissenschaft und Historiographie um 1500* (Weimar, 1999); Viktor Anton Nordmann, *Die Vandalia des Albert Krantz* (Helsinki, 1934).

³⁰ Andermann, *Albert Krantz*, pp. 40, 149.

³¹ Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung' (1926), pp. 296–301.

³² Johansen, 'Die Legende von der Aufseglung Livlands', pp. 47–51; Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung' (1926), pp. 303–5; Bauer, 'Einleitung', pp. XXXIX–XL.

³³ HCL XXIII.2, p. 155.

³⁴ Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung' (1926), p. 304.

attracted numerous Livonian students, and it seems likely that some fragments of Henry's chronicle found their way to Melanchthon.³⁵ Paul Johansen argued, as mentioned above, that the mid sixteenth-century interpolation might have originated in Wittenberg among Melanchthon's pupils and considered it possible that they were, in fact, preparing a printed edition of Henry's chronicle.³⁶ Their writings, however, hardly suggest that they were very familiar with the text.

The Reception in Livonia

Henry's chronicle fared little better among the Livonian historiographers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. A few scattered passages indicate superficial knowledge of it, but there was no true reception of Henry's writings until the chronicler Thomas Hiärn (c. 1638–78) in the 1670s, who relied heavily on them. Apart from this isolated case, however, Henry's influence remained shallow, at best.

In 1541, the Dominican Augustin von Gethelen, a well-known opponent of Lutheranism and member of the Riga cathedral chapter, attended the wedding of a young noblewoman of the Üxküll family. Gethelen discussed matters of genealogy with the bride's father and promised to write a treatise on the origins of the Üxküll family, based on 'old and reliable chronicles and histories' that he had access to.³⁷ Arbusow conjectured that Gethelen was referring to Henry's Livonian chronicle, as it contains the oldest information on the Üxküll ancestors.³⁸ The genealogy of the Üxküll family, which might have been the first early modern text in Livonia to use Henry's chronicle, has unfortunately been lost. Its only trace is Gethelen's letter to Otto Üxküll where he mentions his problems in delivering the treatise to the addressee.

³⁵ Hildebrand, *Die Chronik Heinrichs von Lettland*, p. 3, suspects that partial knowledge of the Livonian chronicle was conveyed by Augustinus Eucaedius, a humanist poet from Riga who published his major writings in Wittenberg. Johansen, 'Die Legende von der Aufsegelung Livlands', p. 50, believes that the intermediary was Hermann von Nehmen, the same person to whom he ascribes the interpolation.

³⁶ Johansen, 'Die Legende von der Aufsegelung Livlands', p. 50.

³⁷ Georg Berkholz, 'Der Rigasche Domherr Augustinus von Getelen', *Mittheilungen aus dem Gebiete der Geschichte Liv-, Ehst- und Kurlands* 11 (1868), 521–5 (here 524): 'ick des bie my, vth gantz oldenn vnd bewertenn Croniken Historienn, der Lande tho Lyfflandt etc. guden grundt vnd bescheit hedde.'

³⁸ Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung' (1926), pp. 301–3.

The references to the Livonian chronicle that did survive can hardly be considered an in-depth reception: in 1548, the humanist poet Rutgerus Pistorius alludes to Henry's favourite etymology when he derives the name 'Riga' from *rigare*, to water: *Qua sacra gentes Riga rigavit aqua*.³⁹ Johann Lohmüller (c. 1438–1560), the city syndic of Riga, used Henry's chronicle as a source for his *Warhaftig Histori* ('Truthful History'), written around 1550, and also copied Henry's technique of arranging the events based on the incumbency of Bishop Albert.⁴⁰ Another sixteenth-century poet, Augustinus Eucaedius, picked single details from Henry's chronicle, mainly the mere fact that particular bishops and clerics participated in the Baltic crusades.⁴¹ A more thorough knowledge of Henry's work can be deduced from the late sixteenth-century writings of Heinrich von Tiesenhausen, who used Henry's chronicle particularly in the opening passages of his chronicle of the bishops of Riga.⁴² The superficial references to Henry in Moritz Brandis's (c. 1550–1604) *Lieffländische Geschichte* ('Livonian History'), written around 1600, are mainly indirect quotations taken from Tiesenhausen, on whom Brandis relied heavily.⁴³

The so-called Lode–Werner chronicle, a late seventeenth-century text composed, in collaboration, by the nobleman Gustav von Lode (1633–1705) and David Werner, the tutor of Lode's children, lists certain *Annales antiquitatum Livoniae* among its sources, thereby referring to Henry's chronicle. It has been debated whether Lode and Werner used a manuscript of Henry's chronicle themselves, or whether instead they copied the relevant sections from Thomas Hiärn who – as discussed below – made extensive use of Henry's chronicle.⁴⁴ David Werner, however, seems to have been familiar with the Livonian chronicle. According to an eighteenth-century manuscript, Werner vouched that a copy of the chronicle, which he considered to be an original, was preserved at the Royal

³⁹ Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung' (1926), p. 250.

⁴⁰ Ulrich Müller, *Johann Lohmüller und seine livländische Chronik 'Warhaftig Histori'. Biographie des Autors, Interpretation und Edition des Werkes* (Lüneburg, 2001), pp. 164–5.

⁴¹ Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung' (1926), pp. 311–14.

⁴² Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung' (1926), pp. 315–17. The relevant passages have been printed: *ibid.* (1927), pp. 174–92.

⁴³ Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung' (1926), pp. 317–20.

⁴⁴ Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung' (1926), pp. 330–32, (1927), p. 198, remains undecided on this matter: 'Whether Werner used it [a Henry manuscript] in his chronicle as well has to be determined by further research' ('Ob Werner sie aber auch in seiner Chronik benutzt hat, ist noch zu untersuchen'). On the sources of the Lode–Werner chronicle, see Janet Laidla, '17. sajandi ajalookirjutaja raamaturiial' (unpublished MA dissertation, Tartu University, 2006).

Archives in Stockholm.⁴⁵ He did utilize Henry's chronicle in one of his lesser writings, a genealogy of the Lieven family.⁴⁶

Thus, summing up, the reception of Henry's chronicle in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Livonia consisted mainly of fragmentary notes and indirect quotations transmitted via other authors.⁴⁷ This raises the question: why was Henry used so reluctantly, if at all? For one thing, he may simply have been unavailable. During the early modern period, Livonia had to endure decades of continuous warfare. Especially during the devastating Livonian War (1558–82/83) there was a great loss of manuscripts, and many authors might have had no access to Henry's chronicle, apart from a few scattered notes and excerpts that were circulating.

But even if the chronicle was available, early modern scholars might not have considered it to be very interesting. The Livonian War and the appalling devastation that the country suffered during that time had left a deep impact on Livonian historiography. Prominent writers such as Balthasar Russow (c. 1536–1600), Salomon Henning (c. 1528–89) and Johannes Renner (c. 1525–83) were primarily concerned with recent events connected to the Russian invasion, and cared little about the thirteenth century.⁴⁸

And, in addition, Henry's chronicle is the work of a medieval Catholic priest dealing with the exploits of a medieval Catholic bishop. This is not exactly the kind of text that is attractive to a Protestant humanist.⁴⁹ It is worth noting that the sixteenth-century interpolator addressed these two problems: he changed the vocabulary and style of the chronicle to make it more acceptable to humanist

⁴⁵ Latvian Academic Library, Riga, MS 593 (Z 4425), fol. 44^v: *Annales Antiquae Livoniae quae Holmiae in Archivis Regiis in Originali reperiuntur testante Davide Wernero*.

⁴⁶ Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung' (1926), p. 280, (1927), p. 198.

⁴⁷ The two arguably most important chronicles of early modern Livonia, Balthasar Russow's *Chronica der Provintz Lyfflandt* (1578) and Christian Kelch's (1657–1710) *Liefländische Historia* (1695) do not contain any indication that their respective authors were familiar with Henry's chronicle. Cf. Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung' (1926), pp. 314–15, 333.

⁴⁸ Cf. Arved von Taube, "Der Untergang der livländischen Selbständigkeit": Die livländische Chronistik des 16. Jahrhunderts', in *Geschichte der deutschbaltischen Geschichtsschreibung*, ed. Georg von Rauch (Cologne and Vienna, 1986), pp. 21–41.

⁴⁹ With the exception of Dionysius Fabricius (*Livonica historia*), a Jesuit priest from Courland, and Friedrich Menius (*Syntagma de origine Livonorum*, 1635), a Dorpat professor who was seemingly influenced by anti-trinitarian heresies, all of the major historiographers of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Livonia were staunchly Lutheran. Some of the most influential chronicles were in fact written by Protestant pastors such as Balthasar Russow and Christian Kelch.

standards, and he even – probably unintentionally – included a remark on Protestant doctrine.

A critical attitude towards the Livonian chronicle is expressed by Hermann von Brevern (1663–1721), a reputable scholar from Riga. Brevern gives a brief account of a source that he does not mention by name, but characterizes as ‘eine lateinische Beschreibung dessen, so sich zur Zeit der drey ersten Bischöffe von Lieflland zugetragen’ (‘a Latin description of what happened during the time of the first three bishops in Livonia’):

Whoever has seen the original will be properly able to judge this work and its antiquity. It is quite devoid of good remarks, and possibly not without traces of the one or the other mistake. It is, in fact, the work of a monk who, with the ignorance typical of his time, noted this and that following his whim. It is, by the way, certain that it is an old text.⁵⁰

Bevern's harsh words are the first known evaluation of Henry's chronicle and its importance as a historical source. They might help to understand why he, his contemporaries and his predecessors were not too keen to use the writings of an ‘ignorant monk’.

The only seventeenth-century author who did make extensive use of Henry's Livonian chronicle was Thomas Hiärn.⁵¹ Hiärn, who is commonly regarded as

⁵⁰ Hermann von Brevern, ‘Kurtze Anzeige derer Scribenten, aus welchen die Historie von Lieflland nach Möglichkeit zusammen gefasst werden könnte’, in *Zur Geschichte der Familie von Brevern*, vol. 1, ed. Georg von Brevern (Berlin, 1878), pp. 115–38 (here 117–18): ‘Wer das Original gesehen, wird von dieser Arbeit und dessen Alterthum bestens urtheilen können. Es ist dieselbe von guten Remarquen ziemlich steril, und vielleicht nicht ohne marquen dieser und jener Falsitet, sondern vielmehr eine Arbeit eines Mönchen, der nach seiner damahligen Unwissenheit, auch nach seiner Passion dieses und jenes annotirt hat. Uebrigens ist es gewiss, dass es eine alte Arbeit sey.’

⁵¹ Hiärn was the son of a Swedish pastor from Ingermanland. Together with his younger brother Urban, who later became a well-known naturalist and poet, he briefly attended the university at Dorpat. Throughout his life, Thomas Hiärn was in the service of Swedish dignitaries in Livonia, first as a secretary of the governor, then as an overseer at the estates of Count Gustav Banér. His chronicle accordingly depicts Livonia's history from a Swedish point of view. On Hiärn and his writings, see Gottfried Etzold, ‘Die Geschichtsschreibung der polnisch-schwedischen Zeit’, in *Geschichte der deutschbaltischen Geschichtsschreibung*, ed. Georg von Rauch (Cologne and Vienna, 1986), pp. 43–61 (here 54–6); Lea Leppik, ‘Thomas Hiärne und seine Chronik’, in *Den otidsenlige Urban Hiärne. Föredrag från det internationella Hiärne-symposiet i Saadjärve, 31 augusti – 4 september 2005*, ed. Stig Örjan Ohlsson and Siiri Tomingas-Joandi (Tartu, 2008), pp. 51–64; Piret Lotman, ‘Thomas Hiärne – nimi Rootsi Läänemereprovintside varasest ajalookirjutusest’, in *Ajalookirjutaja aeg/Aetas historicorum*, ed. Piret Lotman (Tallinn, 2008), pp. 114–40; Janet Laidla, ‘Thomas Hiärn ja

one of Livonia's most remarkable historiographers of the seventeenth century, wrote a comprehensive history of Livonia from the most distant past up to his own time. The *Ehst-, Lyf- und Lettländische Geschichte* ('Estonian, Livonian and Latvian History') remained unfinished at his death and was not published until the nineteenth century.⁵² Hiärn's third book, dealing with the crusades and the conversion, relies heavily on Henry of Livonia and has been described as a summary of Henry's chronicle. He had access to two different versions of the chronicle, one corresponding to the interpolated version and one to the non-interpolated version, which he regarded as two distinctively different sources.⁵³

Hiärn's indebtedness to Henry of Livonia raises the question why only he used the chronicle extensively, while his contemporaries ignored it. For one thing, Hiärn was known as an especially curious historiographer who was interested in unusual sources, and he devoted particular attention to the earlier history of Livonia. This was noted by contemporary observers as well: after the author's death, a certain Heinrich Hakelmann, a printer and bookseller, tried to raise money to publish Hiärn's manuscripts. In 1679, Hakelmann wrote to the Estonian knighthood for funding, stressing Hiärn's treatment of the earlier history as one of the greatest merits of his chronicle: 'The manifold grievances that so little is known of the older Livonian history and events have prompted Thomas Hiärne, of blessed memory, to embark upon a difficult and laborious undertaking and, through precise descriptions, light a bright flare, so that everybody may see what had come to pass in this land more than a thousand years ago.'⁵⁴

Secondly, Hiärn was keenly interested in the Estonians. A certain benevolent attitude towards the Livonian peasants was very common among authors with

tema Eesti-, Liivi- ja Lätimaa ajalugu', *Õpetatud Eesti Seltsi aastaraamat/Annales litterarum societatis Esthonicae* (2006), 75–90; Sixten Humble, 'Thomas Hiärne', *Personhistorisk tidskrift* 26 (1925), 28–46; Rudolf Winkler, 'Beiträge zur Biographie des Geschichtsschreibers Thomas Hiärne', *Sitzungsberichte der kurländischen Gesellschaft für Literatur und Kunst und Jahresbericht des kurländischen Provinzialmuseums* (1908), 45–50.

⁵² Thomas Hiärn, *Ehst-, Lyf- und Lettländische Geschichte*, ed. C.E. Napiersky (Riga, 1835).

⁵³ Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung' (1926), pp. 322–30.

⁵⁴ G. von Brevern, 'Zur Erinnerung an Thomas Hiärne und dessen Chronik', *Archiv für die Geschichte Liv-, Esth- und Curlands* 3 (1844), 317–21 (here 319): 'Die Vielfältige Klagen daß man so wenig von die Alten Lyffländischen Geschicht- und Begebenheiten aufgezeichnet, hat den Sähl. Thomas Hiärne veranlaßet, ein so schwer als Mühsame Arbeit zu unterfangen, und also, durch klare Beschreibung, eine helle Fackel anzünden wollen, damit ein jeder sehen könne, was für mehr als Tausend Jahren in diesem Lande sich begeben und zugetragen.'

a Swedish background, and he was no exception. For linguistic reasons, Hiärn considered the Estonians to be close kinsmen of the Finns,⁵⁵ whom he held in high regard. Throughout history, the Finns had always been brave brothers-in-arms of the Swedes, he claims. It is likely that Hiärn is implicitly referring to the reputation Finnish units gained during the Thirty Years' War (1618–48) and is projecting their martial prowess back in time.

Bearing in mind that Hiärn is interested in the older history of Livonia and seems particularly fascinated by the military performance of Finns and Estonians, it becomes fairly obvious why the Livonian chronicle appeals to him. Henry of Livonia does not only offer an account of old Livonia, but also provides plenty of evidence that the Estonians have always been fierce and warlike.

Johann Daniel Gruber's Edition of the *Codex Oxenstierna*

After remaining little known for centuries, Henry's *Chronicon Livoniae* rose from the obscure fringes of Livonian historiography during the eighteenth century. The man responsible for introducing Henry to a broader audience was Johann Daniel Gruber, a Hanoverian scholar and librarian.⁵⁶ Esteemed by his contemporaries as a very agreeable man of broad erudition,⁵⁷ Gruber became best known to posterity as the editor of two volumes of the philosopher Gottfried Leibniz's letters. During his academic career, Gruber mainly studied jurisprudence,⁵⁸ and his background in the law would later determine the way he interpreted Henry's chronicle. Gruber had composed treatises on the

⁵⁵ Hiärn, *Ehst-, Lyf- und Lettländische Geschichte*, p. 12.

⁵⁶ C.E. Napiersky, 'Zur Erinnerung an Joh. Dan. Gruber', *Das Inland* 13 (1848), cols 273–8.

⁵⁷ 'Origines Livoniae sacrae et civilis', *Nova acta eruditorum* 60 (1741), 295–303 (here 295): 'virum, cujus eruditionem ac doctrinam, an comitatem venustamque humanitatem, primo commendes loco.'

⁵⁸ Gruber was a native of Ipsheim in Franconia and received his academic education at the University of Halle. Initially, he focused on theology, but soon switched his attention to juridical studies. Among his teachers were two of the most eminent German jurists of his time, Johann Peter von Ludewig and Justus Henning Boehmer. In 1710, Gruber received a doctoral degree in philosophy, followed by the *doctor juris* in 1721. He remained in Halle until 1724 when he was appointed regular professor of law at the University of Gießen. In 1727, Gruber entered the service of the Hanoverian kings of Great Britain, first as a councillor at Celle and after 1729 as a historiographer and librarian at Hanover itself. He rose to the rank of a Royal British Privy Councillor of Justice (*Geheimer Justizrat*) and remained in Hanover until his death in 1748. For Gruber's biography, see *Deutsches Biographisches Archiv* I.429,

histories of Brunswick and Göttingen, but having no particular interest in the Baltic region and no previous experience with Livonian historiography, he seemed an unlikely candidate to rediscover Henry's chronicle.

In 1739, however, Gruber acquired some manuscripts that had been in the possession of one Christian Ranzau, a military commander at Lüneburg who had recently died.⁵⁹ At that time, Gruber had been collecting material on the history of Lower Saxony and was, as he later admitted, quite surprised when he found a manuscript on Livonia among Ranzau's bequest.⁶⁰ Gruber's discovery turned out to be one of the oldest surviving copies of Henry's Livonian chronicle, the late sixteenth-century *Codex Oxenstierna*. Realizing that he had accidentally come across a previously unpublished chronicle, Gruber edited the manuscript and had it printed the following year with extensive comments, footnotes and supplementary documents. He was the first to ascribe the *Chronicon Livoniae* to Henry of Livonia⁶¹ – previously, the chronicle had only been referred to as anonymous annals.

Gruber's treatment of the Livonian chronicle leaves the impression that he was truly fond of his accidental discovery. The second paragraph in the introduction is entitled *Chronici hujus praestantia*, 'On the excellence of this chronicle'.⁶² He was, however, also aware of its limitations, and tried to anticipate possible criticism. Gruber was not satisfied with Henry's command of Latin, but he was convinced that the importance of his discovery should prompt its readers to overlook the stylistic limitations:

All of this is described by a Livonian, who had been present himself, in an awkward style that bears the smell of the era, but so reliably, so precisely and so copiously, that there is little left to be desired in this description of Livonia's religious and secular origins. Few commonwealths, as far as I know, are graced with such a description of their origins. And thus I liberate this work of a pilgrim, that has

261–290; II.486, 223; III.324, 363, in particular Georg Wolfgang Augustin Fikenscher, *Gelehrtes Fürstenthum Baireut ...*, vol. 3 (Erlangen, 1801), pp. 135–40.

⁵⁹ Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung' (1926), pp. 262–6, discusses how the *Codex Oxenstierna* had ended up among Ranzau's possessions.

⁶⁰ *Origines Livoniae* (Hansen edition), p. 9.

⁶¹ *Origines Livoniae* (Hansen edition), p. 10: 'In quem haec cum ceteris, quae dicturus sum, conueniant omnia, alium non inuenio, quam Henricvm illum, Lettvm, scholarem episcopi, ad sacros ordines promotum.'

⁶² Gruber, *Origines Livoniae*, pp. I–II. Gruber's marginal notes are not reproduced in the *Scriptores rerum Livonicarum* edition.

hitherto been unknown to the public, from an imprisonment which lasted for more than five hundred years.⁶³

Gruber had numerous reasons to edit the chronicle: a major motivation might have been the unbridled antiquarian curiosity that was characteristic of the academic community during Gruber's time. The German polyhistor of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries had enlarged both the range of historical topics and the variety of nations that historiography studied to an extent that greatly surpassed the universal histories of sixteenth-century humanism.⁶⁴ Striving for an encyclopaedic knowledge of the past, the *respublica litterarum* turned towards subjects that had hitherto been deemed negligible, inappropriate or trivial. In the polyhistor's pursuit of all-encompassing history, there was no such thing as an irrelevant source or an insignificant historical topic. An unknown old manuscript had to be edited just because it was there.

At the same time, Gruber was courting favours from his patrons. He dedicated the edition to the Hanoverian King George II of Great Britain (r. 1727–60) who, as Elector of Brunswick-Lüneburg, was his sovereign and employer.⁶⁵ Gruber took great efforts to establish complimentary connections between Henry's chronicle and the ancestors of King George.⁶⁶ Since the House of Hanover is descended from the Guelph dynasty, Gruber praises the missionary efforts of Henry the Lion, the Duke of Saxony (1142–80) who, as the preface stresses, did not only subjugate and convert the Slavs on the Southern Baltic shores, but also furthered the Christianization of Livonia. The first merchants to reach the Düna (Latv. Daugava, Est. Väina, Russ. Dvina) had

⁶³ *Origines Livoniae* (Hansen edition), p. 7: '... eas res omnes homo Liunonus, qui cunctis ipse interfuit, rudi quidem stilo et scribentis seculum redolente; at tanta fide, tam perspicue, tamque copiose enarrat, vt in Originibus Livoniæ sacræ et ciuilibus, quod paucis ciuitatibus contingere memini, parum supersit, quod iure quisquam possit desiderare. Atque hoc ipsum hominis peregrini opus, publice nondum visum, e carcere quingentorum et amplius annorum ego nunc libero.'

⁶⁴ See Anthony Grafton, 'The World of the Polyhistor: Humanism and Encyclopedism,' *Central European History* 18 (1985), 31–47 (here 41–2).

⁶⁵ Gruber and George II knew each other personally. In the preface to his edition of the Livonian chronicle, Gruber proudly notes that whenever the king is in Hanover, he visits the library that he, Gruber, is supervising, inspects the latest historical treatises and offers erudite comments. See *Origines Livoniae* (Hansen edition), p. 7.

⁶⁶ Gruber's frequent attempts to construct connections between the *Chronicon Livoniae* and the British court may have contributed to the confusion in Schlözer's seminal *Nordische Geschichte*, which claims that Henry himself had been an Englishman. See August Ludwig Schlözer, *Allgemeine Nordische Geschichte* (Halle, 1771), p. 246.

been under Henry the Lion's protection, and two of the characters featured by Henry of Livonia had formerly been his retainers: Bernard of Lippe (c. 1140–1224), the abbot of the Dünamünde monastery, was a veteran of the Guelphs' feud against the archbishop of Cologne in the late 1170s and early 1180s, before taking monastic vows and entering the Cistercian order; Archbishop Hartwig II of Hamburg-Bremen (r. 1184–1207), who was responsible for dispatching missionaries to Livonia, had previously served Henry the Lion as a notary.⁶⁷

Another supporter of the Livonian missionaries, King Canute VI of Denmark (r. 1182–1202),⁶⁸ could likewise be linked to the House of Hanover: Canute's sister, Helena, was married to the youngest son of Henry the Lion. She was the ancestor of the Dukes of Brunswick-Lüneburg and thus also the progenitor of King George II.⁶⁹ 'I relate all this,' Gruber states, 'so that it may become obvious how much the family of Henry the Lion, his nobles, his friends and retainers have laboured so that Livonia, which had previously been partially independent and partially Russian and devoted to the cult of idols, would become German and, at the same time, Christian.'⁷⁰

Gruber was indeed willing to adjust his appraisal of the Livonian chronicle to the expectations of his audience. In the draft of a letter that he wrote to an unnamed recipient⁷¹ – most likely a person with close ties to the Russian court – Gruber gives the Russian presence in Livonia a different nuance: 'This chronicle is so rich in new truths that it has been deemed worthy to be delivered to the printer, with some comments on the most difficult parts. It proves, among other things, that Livonia had been subordinate to the Russians before the Germans, Swedes and Danes arrived.' Gruber points out that the Livs paid tribute to the Russian princes and governors, and that the first German missionaries had acknowledged Russian sovereignty by asking the Russians for permission to baptize the Livish heathens. 'This might explain why the ancients considered

⁶⁷ *Origines Livoniae* (Hansen edition), pp. 5–6. See Christina Kupffer, *Geschichte als Gedächtnis. Der livländische Historiker und Jurist Friedrich Konrad Gadebusch (1719–1788)* (Cologne, 2004), pp. 103–4.

⁶⁸ HCL III.2, p. 12, mentions that Canute bestowed presents upon Bishop Albert when the latter visited Denmark after his consecration.

⁶⁹ *Origines Livoniae* (Hansen edition), p. 69, note b.

⁷⁰ *Origines Livoniae* (Hansen edition), p. 6: 'Quae cuncta propterea commemoro, vt appareat, quantum Henrici Leonis familia, proceres, amici et clientes in hoc elaborauerint, vt *Liuania*, quae ante idolorum cultui dedita, partimque sui iuris et libera, partim Ruthenica fuit, *Teutonica* fieri eadem *Christiana*.'

⁷¹ The draft, dating most probably from the first part of the year 1740, has been published by Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung' (1927), pp. 194–5.

Livonia to be a part of Russia.⁷² Implicitly, Gruber presents his discovery as a document that justifies and legitimizes Czarist rule over the Baltic provinces that Russia had acquired less than 20 years before.

As it seems, Gruber had a considerable talent for promoting his scholarly achievements. For his patron, the British king, he came up with an English connection; to the Russians, he presented his chronicle as a confirmation of Russian sovereignty. However, there is one more, and I believe very central, aspect that motivated Gruber to publish the *Chronicon Livoniae*. In the preface, he explains what the reader may expect from the chronicle:

He [Henry] explains how and when the Saxons first came to Livonia; what pagan Livonia had been like; who they were who either vanquished the barbarians through force of arms, or brought them to humanity and Christianity explaining the rewards of eternal life, partially by force, partially through teaching and instruction; what the reason was for the establishment of a Christian knighthood, and how weak the Order of the Sword Brethren was in its beginnings; which cities were founded; which castles were occupied, and how; which battles were fought; how a nation that had previously been ignorant of any amenities of society – apart from the institution of family – received its first government and jurisdiction from the priests, and formed into a just and civil commonwealth.⁷³

This last sentence is, I believe, central to Gruber's reading of Henry. Gruber argues that the Estonians, Lettgallians and Livs, as described by Henry, lacked any institutions of statehood or civil society – as if they were in a state of nature. To the eighteenth century, this is indeed incredibly exciting: the state of nature, the hypothetical condition of humanity before the formation of organized institutions of law and rulership, was enormously important to Enlightenment

⁷² Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung' (1927), p. 194: 'Dieses Chronicon ist so voll neuer Wahrheiten, dass man es würdig geachtet hat mit einigen Anmerkungen über die schwehresten Stellen zu versehen, und unter die Presse zu geben. Unter andern lässt sich daraus beweisen, dass Liefland, vor der Ankunfft der Deutschen, Schweden u. Dänen, denen Russen unterwürffig gewesen sey. ... Daher mag es gekommen seyn, dass Liefland von der alten Welt für ein Theil Russlands gehalten worden.'

⁷³ *Origines Livoniae* (Hansen edition), p. 9: 'Narrat nempe, quomodo et quando a Saxonibus adita sit primum Liuania; quae Liuaniae paganæ facies fuerit; quinam illi, qui populum barbarum vel armis domuerunt, vel propositis vitae aeternae præmiis ad humanitatem atque ad sacra Christiana, partim vi, partim docendo et instruendo perduxerunt; quae instituendae *Militiae Christi* ratio, et quam tenuia Ordinis Ensiferorum initia; quae vrbes tum conditae; quae castra, quomodo occupata; quae pugnae pugnatae; quomodo gens, praeter statum familiae ceterorum socialitatis commodum expers, coierit in formam iustae ciuitatis, Magistratus primos e sacerdotibus nacta, et constitutionem iudiciorum.'

thinking, to men such as Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Samuel Pufendorf or Jean-Jacques Rousseau.⁷⁴ Accounts and descriptions of the state of nature display a considerable disparity, ranging from Hobbes's grim imagery – the regularly quoted 'war ... of every man against every man', where life is 'nasty, brutish and short'⁷⁵ – to the eighteenth-century enthusiasm for noble savages and exotic robinsonades rooted, at least partially, in a simplified reading of Rousseau.⁷⁶

Regardless of these conflicting images, the state of nature served as a focal point of departure for philosophical thought. The idea of a pre-social, pre-governmental condition in which all people were equal before God enabled early modern society to reflect on itself. Reconstructing the mechanisms and motivations that led to the initial establishment of statehood, it raised the question of which political system best served the interests of the individual. The assumption of a state of nature thus formed the foundation of eighteenth-century political and juridical theories.⁷⁷

Having been educated as a jurist, Johann Daniel Gruber was well aware of the importance of the state of nature theorem. The juridical faculty at the University of Halle where Gruber had studied and taught was known for its focus on natural law – a tradition established in the 1690s by Christian Thomasius (1655–1728), the faculty's first professor and an ardent and controversial champion of *lex naturalis*, and continued in particular by Gruber's teacher, Justus Henning Boehmer (1674–1749).⁷⁸ It is hardly surprising that, as a Halle alumnus with a background in the laws, Gruber

⁷⁴ For an introduction to the comprehensive literature on the differing concepts of the state of nature that were formulated by these and other authors during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, see, for example, Hasso Hofmann, 'Naturzustand', in *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, vol. 6, ed. Joachim Ritter and Karlfried Gründer (Basle, 1984), cols 653–8.

⁷⁵ Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* XIII, ed. Richard Tuck (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 88–9.

⁷⁶ A. Owen Aldridge, 'Primitivism in the Eighteenth Century', in *Dictionary of the History of Ideas: Studies of Selected Pivotal Ideas*, vol. 3, ed. Philip P. Wiener (New York, 1973), pp. 598–605. Cf. also Günther Bien, 'Zum Thema des Naturstands im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert', *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte* 15 (1971), 275–98.

⁷⁷ Hofmann, 'Naturzustand', col. 654; Hans Medick, *Naturzustand und Naturgeschichte der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft. Die Ursprünge der bürgerlichen Sozialtheorie als Geschichtsphilosophie und Sozialwissenschaft bei Samuel Pufendorf, John Locke und Adam Smith* (Göttingen, 1973), p. 23.

⁷⁸ Notker Hammerstein, *Jus und Historie. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des historischen Denkens an deutschen Universitäten im späten 17. und im 18. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen, 1972), pp. 72–84; Hinrich Rüping, *Die Naturrechtslehre des Christian Thomasius und ihre Fortbildung in der Thomasius-Schule* (Bonn, 1968); Wilhelm Schrader, *Geschichte der Friedrichs-Universität zu Halle*, vol. 1 (Berlin, 1894), pp. 147–55.

would read Henry's chronicle with the state of nature debate in his mind. He claims that his discovery is a case study that shows the crucial moment in human history where the so-called 'state of nature' is transformed into a civilized, organized and lawful commonwealth. Echoing John Locke's *Second Treatise of Government* (1690),⁷⁹ Gruber argues that such case studies are very rare indeed: 'All this, even though it is narrated in few words and without any pretensions, is particularly welcome and useful to read, since the origins of commonwealths, both religious and secular, are rarely recorded in literature; and if they are, they have often been lost.'⁸⁰

Gruber's emphasis on the state of nature is also reflected in the title of his edition. He chose to publish his discovery as *Origines Livoniae sacrae et civilis*. There had been several treatises with similar titles dating from the preceding century. The dissertation *De Origine Livonorum* is the most important among these seventeenth-century texts on Livonian origins. It had been written by Dorpat professor Olaus Hermelin (c. 1658–1712) in 1693 and was reprinted due to popular demand in Leipzig in 1717.⁸¹ Hermelin and other seventeenth-century scholars had, however, something different in mind when speaking of origins: their treatises deal with speculations about Livonia's most distant past and narrate the exploits of semi-legendary ancestors and heroes that

⁷⁹ John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, II, §§ 99–101, ed. Peter Laslett (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 333–4: 'Whosoever therefore out of a state of Nature unite into a Community, must be understood to give up all the power, necessary to the ends for which they unite into Society, to the majority of the Community. ... And thus that, which begins and actually constitutes any Political Society, is nothing but the consent of any number of Freemen capable of a majority to unite and incorporate into such a Society. And this is that, and that only, which did, or could give beginning to any lawful Government in the World. To this I find two objections made. First, That there are no instances to be found in Story, of a Company of Men independent, and equal one amongst another, that met together, and in this way began and set up a Government. ... To the first there is this to Answer. That it is not at all to be wonder'd, that History gives us but a very little account of Men, that lived together in the State of Nature. ... Government is every where antecedent to Records, and Letters seldom come in amongst a People till a long continuation of Civil Society has, by other more necessary Arts, provided for their Safety, Ease, and Plenty. And then they begin to look after the History of their Founders, and search into their original, when they have out-lived the memory of it. For 'tis with Common-wealths as with particular Persons, they are commonly ignorant of their own Births and Infancies.'

⁸⁰ *Origines Livoniae* (Hansen edition), p. 9: 'Quæ cuncta, vtut paucis verbis et sine fuco enarrentur; lectu sunt tanto iucundiora et vttiliora, quanto rarius in literas relatae sunt rerumpublicarum origines sacrae et ciuiles; vel in literas relatae frequentius periere.'

⁸¹ Olavus Hermelin [praes.] and Gustavus Adolphus Humble [resp.], *De Origine Livonorum Dissertatio* (Dorpat, 1693). Reprinted in volume II of the *Scriptores rerum Livonicarum* (1848).

allegedly took place centuries before the birth of Christ. To them, the *origines Livonorum* end at the onset of recorded history – that is, at the arrival of German merchants, missionaries and crusaders in the twelfth century.⁸²

Gruber gives the term *origines Livoniae* a new twist. To him, the time of origins commences just at the moment when Hermelin and his colleagues thought it had ended: with the appearance of civilized state-builders who transformed a natural state into an organized commonwealth. Origins do not deal with putative events that took place in time immemorial; they stand at the beginning of statehood and institutions. Admitting that *Origines Livoniae* is not the original title of the newly discovered manuscript, Gruber argues that it is, nonetheless, a very suitable heading for his edition: ‘Books commonly flaunt the title *Origines*, and after reading them we realize that the author did not know anything about the origins he had promised. Why shouldn’t the name *Origines* be appropriate for a text which obviously relates the origins, even though its author did not embellish it with such a title?’⁸³

It is, admittedly, doubtful whether Gruber’s understanding of Henry’s chronicle as a case study for the state of nature is particularly meaningful. To the leading philosophers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the state of nature was more of a hypothetical model than a historical fact, a precursor to organized society that could be deduced logically rather than described empirically.⁸⁴ The metahistorical character of the classical state-of-

⁸² Cf. Stefan Donecker, ‘Verweise auf Antike und Frühmittelalter in frühneuzeitlichen Abhandlungen zum Baltikum. Zur Diskursivität europäischer Peripherie’, in *Vergangenheit und Vergegenwärtigung. Frühes Mittelalter und europäische Erinnerungskultur*, ed. Helmut Reimitz and Bernhard Zeller (Vienna, 2009), pp. 157–68.

⁸³ *Origines Livoniae* (Hansen edition), p. 14: ‘Etenim si vulgo Originum cerussa nitent libelli, quorum lectione certiores reddimur, origines promissas ab scriptore nesciri; cur Originum nomen non deceat opus, quod origines aperte loquitur, etiamsi ab auctore suo Originum hedera non sit ornatum?’

⁸⁴ Hans Aarsleff, ‘The State of Nature and the Nature of Man in Locke’, in *John Locke: Problems and Perspectives. A Collection of New Essays*, ed. John W. Yolton (Cambridge, 1969), pp. 99–136 (here 103): ‘It is important to understand that Locke’s argument does not depend on demonstration or proof that the state of nature – or the state of men as we may call it – has ever in fact existed. It is in the nature of the case that such proof and demonstration cannot be had. It is sufficient to grant that it might or could have existed according to his conception of man’s nature and of men living together at some time prior to civil society and government. Only in this limited sense can it be called historical.’ On Hobbes and Pufendorf, see Iring Fetscher, ‘Der gesellschaftliche “Naturzustand” und das Menschenbild bei Hobbes, Pufendorf, Cumberland und Rousseau. Ein Beitrag zur Standortbestimmung der politischen Theorie Rousseaus’, *Schmollers Jahrbuch für Gesetzgebung, Verwaltung und Volkswirtschaft* 80 (1960), 641–85; Medick, *Naturzustand*, pp. 40–41, 47.

nature theories did not, however, prevent the enthusiastic examination of allegedly primitive societies and savage customs in the eighteenth century's popular discourses.⁸⁵ But even if one considers such case studies expedient, it is doubtful that Henry's chronicle provides a particularly good example for the transition from the state of nature to a civilized commonwealth. There is no denying that organized statehood was forcefully introduced to Livonia by foreign conquerors. The formation of a commonwealth should, according to the model, be based on the consent of the individuals involved, without any coercion. To Locke, an individual only departs from the state of nature if he or she voluntarily agrees to join a legitimate political community; people under foreign occupation thus remain in a natural state.⁸⁶ According to this understanding, Livonia would hardly count as a proper case study for the transition to a commonwealth.

Despite these inconsistencies, Gruber's interpretation of the Livonian chronicle gained general acclaim. Hostile assessments, like Møller's previously quoted disdain, became rarer and rarer. August Ludwig Schlözer (1735–1809), in his highly influential *Allgemeine Nordische Geschichte*, praised both Henry of Livonia and Johann Daniel Gruber, judging the 1740 edition as '[e]in Muster einer guten Chronik und zugleich ein Muster einer vollkommenen Chronikenausgabe' ('a model of a good chronicle, and likewise a model of a perfect chronicle edition'). His evaluation mirrors Gruber's own understanding of the *Origines Livoniae* as a case study of origins, of the crucial historical moment between state of nature and organized society:

[Henry] described only the history of his lifetime, a short period between 1186 and 1226. But this period happens to comprise the origin of Livonian history. Among other nations, the origins are rarely covered by the annalists. Is there another chronicle in the world that combines these attributes? Truly, Henry deserves Gruber, and the best chronicle deserves the best editor.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Even Hobbes, *Leviathan* XIII, p. 89, did consider the factual existence of the state of nature and referred to the Native Americans as a kind of case study: 'It may peradventure be thought, there was never such a time, nor condition of warre as this; and I believe it was never generally so, over all the world: but there are many places, where they live so now. For the savage peoples in many places of America ... have no government at all; and live at this day in that brutish manner.'

⁸⁶ See A. John Simmons, 'Locke's State of Nature', in *The Social Contract Theorists: Critical Essays on Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau*, ed. Christopher W. Morris (Lanham, 1999), pp. 97–120 (here 99–102).

⁸⁷ Schlözer, *Allgemeine Nordische Geschichte*, p. 246: '... er beschrieb nur die Geschichte seiner Lebenszeit, nur einen kleinen Raum vom J. 1186 bis 1226, und dieser Raum begreift gerade den Anfang der Livländischen Geschichte, dem es sonst bey andern Völkern durchaus

The reception of the *Chronicon Livoniae* is not devoid of a certain irony. During the nineteenth century, Henry's chronicle was attractive to patriotic Finnish scholars because it proved that Finno-Ugric tribes had state-building capabilities even before the German arrival. To Gruber and his contemporaries a century earlier, the chronicle was attractive because it proved exactly the opposite: that the inhabitants of Livonia had no state-building capabilities whatsoever, but were proper state-of-nature savages. It is indeed striking to note how different scholarly traditions can draw completely different conclusions from one and the same text.

an Annalen mangelt. Giebt es noch eine Chronik in der Welt, die alle diese Eigenschaften beysammen hätte? In Wahrheit ist Heinrich Grubers, die beste Chronik des besten Herausgebers, werth.'

Chapter 16

Henry's Chronicle in the Service of Historical Thought: Editors and Editions

Tiina Kala

Introduction

In the Baltic Sea region, each medievalist has his or her own personal relationship with the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia.¹ In addition, different political regimes have used this chronicle in their own ways. Henry's text has fed different national impulses. We can differentiate between antiquarian, historical (scientific) and popular interest in Henry's text. Some editions of the chronicle present, very clearly, only one of these attitudes, while others combine different aspects. One may be tempted to connect the antiquarian interest with the eighteenth century, the scientific with the nineteenth and the popular with the twentieth century. In the case of some editions this is actually true, while with others different interests are combined in the same edition.

Although Henry's chronicle is the oldest narrative source for Livonian history, it is relatively young in a historiographical sense. For example, the chronicles of Balthasar Russow (1578)² and Christian Kelch (1695),³ which both appeared in print, have had a far greater influence than Henry's manuscript chronicle. Russow's and Kelch's chronicles were both widely known long before

¹ This article was written with the support of grant no. 7129 awarded by the Estonian Science Foundation and research project no. SF0130019s08 financed by the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research. All translations are mine unless otherwise noted.

² Balthasar Russow, *Chronica der Prouintz Lyfflandt* (Rostock, 1578, 2nd edn Bart, 1584).

³ Christian Kelch, *Liefländische Historia, oder Kurze Beschreibung der Denckwürdigsten Kriegs- und Friedens-Geschichte Esth-, Lief- und Lettlandes* (Reval and Rudolphstadt, 1695); Christian Kelch, *Liefländische Historia, oder Kurze Beschreibung der Denckwürdigsten Kriegs- und Friedens-Geschichte: Continuation 1690 bis 1706* (Dorpat, 1874).

Henry's chronicle was discovered. And both of these chronicles had already forged an understanding of history among the local literary elite in Estonia.⁴

This chapter concentrates on the editions of Henry's chronicle: in what circumstances these editions appeared, what technical solutions were used to convey the text, and how and why the editors explained their interest in the text and the need to edit it. In other words, in what way general tendencies in the study of history and in source editing are reflected in different editions of Henry's chronicle.

It is not as easy as it might seem to draw a line between an edition and a manuscript. A handwritten copy to which a scribe has made additions according to his improved understanding, normalized orthography according to the traditions of his time, and added dating and commentaries, could also be looked upon as an edition. Modern research has discarded most of the late copies of the chronicle on the pretext that they do not convey correctly Henry's original text. Although such copies are of low value for establishing the text of the lost original, they nevertheless convey those understandings of history and of language in general, and of Henry's text in particular, which were characteristic of their own time. This is also true in the case of printed editions. In this study the difference between a handwritten copy and an edition is made on roughly technical grounds: an edition is a printed copy.

At present, over 30 printed editions of the chronicle have appeared (the number includes parallel editions and later reprints of earlier editions). Among these, 18 can be considered as independent. Three editions of the chronicle have Latin text only.⁵ The chronicle has been translated into German (four independent translations), Estonian (three independent translations), Latvian (three independent translations), Russian (two independent translations), English, Lithuanian, Finnish and Italian (one independent translation in each). By World War II, a young and promising Estonian scholar, the classical philologist Rudolf Laanes, had completed his translation of the chronicle.

⁴ See, for example, references to Kelch's chronicle in the church chronicle of Heinrich Christopher Wrede from the first half of the eighteenth century: *Jöelähtme kirik ja kogudus 18. sajandi esimesel poolel. Pastor Heinrich Christopher Wrede ja tema ametijärglaste kroonikamärkmed*, ed. and trans. Tiina Kala (Tallinn, 2006), pp. 9–10, 18, 30, 91, 225, 245, 279, 375–7, 379.

⁵ *Origines Livoniae sacrae et civilis, seu chronicon Livonicum vetus ...*, ed. Johann Daniel Gruber (Frankfurt and Leipzig, 1740); HCL (further abbreviated as *Chronicon Livoniae*, ed. Arbusow and Bauer [1955]); *Heinrici Chronicon Lyvoniae*, ed. Wilhelm Arndt, MGH *Scriptores rerum Germanicarum* 23 (Hanover and Leipzig, 1874), pp. 231–332 (repr. Leipzig, 1925); *Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum ex MGH separatim editi* (Hanover, 1874 – further marked as 1874₂).

During the war events of summer 1941 in Tartu, Laanes was killed and his manuscript was destroyed in a fire.⁶

The most influential editions, which have served as the basis for many subsequent publications, are those of the Hanover librarian Johann Daniel Gruber from 1740, and of the Baltic-German historians Eduard Pabst from 1867 and Leonid Arbusow and Albert Bauer from 1955 (1959).⁷ There are also some editions which occupy an outstanding position in their specific cultural context, such as the Russian edition of Sergei Anninski from 1938, the Estonian edition of Enn Tarvel and Richard Kleis from 1982, and the Latvian edition of Evalds Mugurevičs and Ābrams Feldhūns from 1993.

The Manuscripts

Henry's text, as it is known today, is a reconstruction – a result of scrupulous textual criticism. Neither an original of the chronicle nor any direct copy of it survives. The manuscript tradition of Henry's chronicle can be best described on the basis of Leonid Arbusow's research. In his work, he not only meticulously described the surviving manuscripts, but also established connections between them more precisely than any researcher before him. A total of 16 manuscript copies of Henry's text from the fourteenth to the eighteenth centuries are known, but not all of them contain the whole text of the chronicle. These 16 manuscripts indicate that an additional eight or nine now lost manuscripts once existed.⁸ Five independent manuscripts which are not copies of other surviving manuscripts survive. Four of them are not interpolated, and one has interpolations. In the following, only these five copies are considered, as they have served as the main basis for the reconstruction of Henry's text.

According to Arbusow, from the original text of the chronicle (H), a thirteenth-century archetype (A) was copied on which all subsequent copies were based. (A) contained mistakes which could not have derived from the

⁶ See more in Selma Laanes, 'See oli pool sajandit tagasi. Klassikiline filoloog Rudolf Laanes', in *Mälestusi Tartu ülikoolist 1900–1944*, ed. Sergei Issakov and Hillar Palamets (Tallinn, 1992), pp. 446–57 (here 448, 451; see also commentaries p. 546).

⁷ See, regarding the most influential editions and research: Norbert Angermann, 'Die mittelalterliche Chronistik', in *Geschichte der deutschbaltischen Geschichtsschreibung*, ed. Georg von Rauch (Cologne and Vienna, 1986), pp. 3–20 (here 5–6, n. 9).

⁸ Leonid Arbusow, 'Die Handschriftliche Überlieferung des "Chronicon Livoniae" Heinrichs von Lettland', *Latvijas Universitātes Raksti* 15 (1926), 189–341 and 16 (1927), 125–202 (here 15, p. 197).

chronicler himself.⁹ The oldest surviving manuscript – the *Codex Zamoscianus* (Z)¹⁰ – dates from the turn of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. It was discovered by August Bielowski in 1862 in the library of a family of nobility, the Zamoyskis, in Warsaw. In the period 1561–1629 Poland ruled over South Estonia. Between 1588 and 1605 Jan Zamoyski, Lord Grand-Chancellor of the Crown beginning in 1578 and Grand Hetman of the Crown beginning in 1581, ruled as Starost over several Polish territories, including Dorpat (Est. Tartu) and its surroundings in South Estonia. This explains how the manuscript found its way to the library of the Zamoyski family.

The *Codex Zamoscianus* lacks about one-third of Henry's text. However, the surviving part of the text is considered to be nearer to the lost original than any other manuscript¹¹ and must have been copied directly from the lost archetype (A). Thus, since its discovery, the *Codex Zamoscianus* has served as the most authoritative copy of Henry's text. It is also the only parchment copy of the chronicle. All others are paper copies.

Four copies of the chronicle are based on a lost fourteenth- or fifteenth-century copy (X) of the lost archetype (A). However, these four manuscripts were not copied directly from X, but from its two lost fifteenth-century copies – M and N. The first of them, the *Codex Skodeiskianus* or *Codex Rigensis* (S),¹² once belonged to a Lutheran pastor from Riga, Nathanael Skodeisky (d. 1769), and later fell into the possession of the Riga city library. It is a seventeenth-century manuscript copied from M, with normalized Latin orthography. Arbusow used *Codex Skodeiskianus* to fill in the gaps of the *Codex Zamoscianus*.¹³ Another copy of M, the *Codex Gymnasialis Revaliensis* (R),¹⁴ is from after 1660 and it once belonged to the library of the Gymnasium in Reval (Est. Tallinn). Although this copy is, in general, of relatively poor quality, it is the only one among all the surviving copies which contains the sentence from chapter XV.3: *simul et virorum interfectorum alia duo milia*.¹⁵

⁹ *Chronicon Livoniae*, ed. Arbusow and Bauer (1955), p. XLIII.

¹⁰ Now in the National Library of Poland (Biblioteka Narodowa) in Warsaw.

¹¹ *Chronicon Livoniae*, ed. Arbusow and Bauer (1955), p. XLIV.

¹² Now in the Latvian Academic Library (*Latvijas Akadēmiskā bibliotēka*) in Riga.

¹³ *Chronicon Livoniae*, ed. Arbusow and Bauer (1955), p. XLV.

¹⁴ In 1925, the manuscript was loaned to Leonid Arbusow in Riga. It was not returned to Estonia and its present whereabouts are unknown. See *Henriku Liivimaa kroonika*, trans. Richard Kleis, ed., notes and introduction Enn Tarvel (Tallinn, 1982, 2nd rev. edn Tallinn, 1993, 3rd rev. edn Tallinn, 2006), p. 11.

¹⁵ *Chronicon Livoniae*, ed. Arbusow and Bauer (1955), p. XLV.

The next copy, the *Codex Toll* (T),¹⁶ was probably copied from the lost N. It is from the seventeenth century and forms a part of a convolute which belonged to Baron Robert von Toll (1802–76), a successful amateur historian. The *Codex Toll* is of relatively poor quality and contains only about one-third of the text of the chronicle.¹⁷ It was probably made on the order of the chronicle writer of Swedish origin Thomas Hiärn (d. 1678),¹⁸ who collected all kinds of source material concerning the Baltic provinces.¹⁹ The *Codex Toll* has been useful in reconstructing parts of three sentences.²⁰

According to Arbusow, the lost N served as a model for what he calls an *Urexemplar* of all interpolated manuscripts – the *Codex Oxenstierna* (o)²¹ from the late sixteenth century, which once belonged to Erik Axelsson Oxenstierna, the Swedish governor of Estonia in 1646–52.²² The *Codex Oxenstierna* was probably initially copied in Livonia between 1550 and 1578 for Baron Heinrich von Tiesenhuisen (1685–1736) of Bërzaune.²³ After the death of the manuscript's later owner Erik Oxenstierna, it remained in the possession of the widow of his brother Johann Oxenstierna (d. 1657), Margarete Brahe. In 1661, Margarete married Count Friedrich of Hessen-Homburg (1633–1708) and the manuscript was carried to Homburg. In the eighteenth century, this copy was in the possession of the commander of Lüneburg, Christian Ranzaus (d. 1739). After the death of Ranzaus, the librarian of the Landesbibliothek of Hanover, Johann Daniel Gruber, acquired the manuscript for his library and became the first editor of the chronicle.²⁴

The *Codex Oxenstierna* was copied in classical Latin and contains a large number of interpolations of all kinds. Among these, Bishop Albert is mentioned

¹⁶ Now in the archives of the Estonian History Museum (Eesti Ajaloomuuseum) in Tallinn.

¹⁷ *Chronicon Livoniae*, ed. Arbusow and Bauer (1955), p. XLV.

¹⁸ *Chronicon Livoniae*, ed. Arbusow and Bauer (1955), p. XLVI.

¹⁹ See Gottfried Etzold, 'Die Geschichtsschreibung der polnisch-schwedischen Zeit', in *Geschichte der deutschbaltischen Geschichtsschreibung*, ed. Georg von Rauch (Cologne and Vienna, 1986), pp. 43–62 (here 54–5); see, regarding Hiärn's use of Henry's chronicle: Arbusow, 'Die Handschriftliche Überlieferung', 15, pp. 322–30, and Chapter 15 by Stefan Donecker in this volume.

²⁰ HCL X.8, p. 38: *littorea saxa – fortissime pugnantes*; XIV.8, p. 78: *Fecerunt namque Estonos comportantes magnas lignorum strues*; XX.7, p. 139: *tam Osilienses quam Harionenses et Scalacenses*; *Chronicon Livoniae*, ed. Arbusow and Bauer (1955), p. XLVI.

²¹ Today in the National Library of Lower Saxony (Niedersächsische Landesbibliothek) in Hanover.

²² *Chronicon Livoniae*, ed. Arbusow and Bauer (1955), p. XLVII, n. 1.

²³ *Henriku Liivimaa kroonika*, trans. Kleis, ed. Tarvel (1982), p. 12.

²⁴ *Chronicon Livoniae*, ed. Arbusow and Bauer (1955), p. XLVII, n. 1.

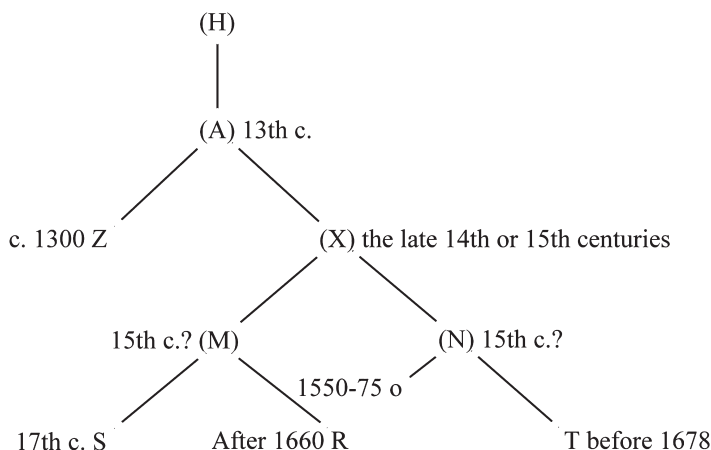


Figure 16.1 *Stemma codicum* of the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia

Key: (H) – the original text of the chronicle; (A) – a lost archetype of later copies; Z – the *Codex Zamoscianus*; (X) – a lost copy; (M) – a lost copy; (N) – a lost copy; S – the *Codex Skodeiskianus* or *Codex Rigensis*; R – the *Codex Gymnasialis Revaliensis*; o – the *Codex Oxenstierna*; T – the *Codex Toll*.

Source: Adapted from *Henrici Chronicon Livoniae*, ed. Leonid Arbusow and Albert Bauer, MGH rer. Germ. in usum scholarum ex MGH separatim editi (Hanover, 1955), p. XLVIII.

as the founder of the Sword Brethren instead of Theodoric (chapter VI.4) and the Bremen merchants as discoverers of the ‘Livonian harbour 67 years ago’, which would make it in 1158 or 1159 (chapter XXIX.9).²⁵

The character of the surviving manuscripts, and especially their comparison to the only medieval copy of the chronicle, the *Codex Zamoscianus*, shows that somewhere in the second half of the sixteenth century the text of the chronicle was revised and several additions were made to it.²⁶

The simplified manuscript stemma (Figure 16.1), which summarizes the previous account, is reproduced according to Arbusow’s introduction to his edition of the chronicle from 1955, and shows only the most important copies which have been used for text reconstruction.²⁷ The sigla of the lost manuscripts are given in brackets.

²⁵ *Chronicon Livoniae*, ed. Arbusow and Bauer (1955), p. XLVI.

²⁶ Arbusow, ‘Die Handschriftliche Überlieferung’, 15, p. 190.

²⁷ See the more detailed stemma in Arbusow, ‘Die Handschriftliche Überlieferung’, 16, p. 160.

The Eighteenth Century

In the eighteenth century, when the first editions of Henry's text appeared, two tendencies can be observed in attitudes towards history writing: an attempt to include everything in a single work, which could be seen as a continuation of the tradition of world chronicles (*Weltchronik*), and an interest in antiquarian curiosities.

The eighteenth century saw two editions of Henry's text. The first edition, by Johann Daniel Gruber (1686–1748), appeared in 1740 and contained Latin text only.²⁸ The second one was a German translation by the school teacher and historian Johann Gottfried Arndt (1710–67), based on the Latin text edited by Gruber.

Gruber's edition is not merely a printed reproduction of a handwritten copy, but is a scrupulous work with a scientific introduction, extensive commentaries, indexes and an appendix of source texts (*Silva documentorum*)²⁹ connected to the events of the chronicle. The edition is dedicated to George II, the king of England (r. 1727–60), on the pretext that the king's ancestors were among the initiators of the German eastern expansion in the twelfth to thirteenth centuries.³⁰ The editor also sought the approval of other crowned heads: one copy of the chronicle was presented to the Russian empress Anna (r. 1730–40), with the editor's personal dedication.³¹

Gruber's introduction gives a brief survey of the conquest of Livonia, which he depicts as a justified expansion of the Christian world. The attitude of the editor is completely sympathetic towards the conquerors. He writes: 'The pious merchants brought with them priests who led the barbaric and uncultivated

²⁸ The full title of this edition is *ORIGINES LIVONIAE SACRAE ET CIVILIS, SEU CHRONICON LIVONICVM VETVS, CONTINENS RES GESTAS TRIVM PRIMORVM EPISCOPORVM: QVIBUS DEVICTAE A SAXONIBVS, ET AD SACRA CHRISTIANORVM TRADVCTAE LIVONIAE ABSOLVITVR HISTORIA: A PIO QVODAM SACERDOTE, QVI IPSE TANTIS REBVS INTERFVIT, CONSCRIPTA, ET AD ANNVM CHRISTI NATI MCCXXVI. DEDVCTA, E CODICE MS. RECENSVIT, SCRIPTORVM CVM AETATE, TVM LOCIS VICINARVM TESTIMONIIS ILLUSTRAVIT, SILVAMQUE DOCUMENTORVM ET TRIPLICEM INDICEM ADIECIT IOAN. DANIEL GRVBER. A. B. FRANCOFORTI ET LIPSLAE ANNO MDCCXL.*

²⁹ See *Origines Livoniae*, 'Silva documentorum', pp. 185–279. On Gruber's edition, see also Chapter 15 by Stefan Donecker in this volume.

³⁰ *Origines Livoniae*, pp. X2v–X3.

³¹ Генрих Латвийский, Хроника Ливонии, trans. Sergei Anninski (Moscow and Leningrad, 1938 – further marked as 1938₁), p. 1.

people, who used to live without God, law and king, to humanity and cognition of divine things ...'³²

According to Gruber, the value of the chronicle lies in the fact that it contains a great deal which one does not find in other sources. Among other details, for example, it includes the names of the first baptized Livs.³³ Although this information is fully derived from the credit the editor gives to the conquerors, it also reflects one of the characteristic features of his edition, namely an interest in local indigenous peoples.

Gruber was fully aware of the need to compare different copies of the chronicle to establish a more reliable text, and regretted the fact that he had only one copy at his disposal, thus implying that the text presented by him was not the best one.³⁴ However, by adding an appendix of documents concerning the conquest and Christianization of Livonia, he attempted not only to convey a text of an old and rare chronicle, but to give a more profound overview of 'by which stages Livonia became Christian and German and how and when the seat of the bishop of Riga became that of the archbishop'.³⁵ In presenting the chronicle and the document appendix, Gruber tried to create a certain 'Livonian library' for the Livonian inhabitant, who might otherwise be cut off from editions and document collections which could enlighten him in his interest in history.³⁶

The problem of the authorship of the chronicle, which later became one of the leading questions for researchers of the chronicle, is already present in Gruber's edition. Gruber was the first to attribute the chronicle to the priest Henry, whom he assumed to be of Latvian origin.³⁷

Gruber's commentaries on the text are remarkably extensive and, although not always correct and reliable in terms of the research of the events and circumstances mentioned in the chronicle, they deserve to be an independent object of research, as they reveal many different attitudes and the state of knowledge of Gruber's own time. Among other things, Gruber provided profound explanations of local peoples,³⁸ in which he was far ahead of his twentieth-century German successors.

³² *Origines Livoniae*, p. X2v: '[mercatores] pios quosdam sacerdotes eo deduxerunt, qui populum barbarum et incultum, sine Deo, sine Lege, sine Rege viuentem, ad humanitatem, ad rerum diuinarum cognitionem iustique et aequi obseruantiam informarent.'

³³ *Origines Livoniae*, pp. I–II.

³⁴ *Origines Livoniae*, pp. V–VI.

³⁵ *Origines Livoniae*, p. VIII: '... quibus gradibus Liouonia facta sit Christiana et Saxonica, et quemadmodum et quando Rigensis cathedra coepit esse Archiepiscopalis.'

³⁶ *Origines Livoniae*, p. VIII.

³⁷ *Origines Livoniae*, pp. II–III.

³⁸ See, for example, regarding Livs: *Origines Livoniae*, p. 3.

His special interest lay in the origin of local place names.³⁹ He also tried to comment on the chronicle's language, although he understood that his possibilities in this field were limited due to the poor quality of the manuscript.

The direct result of Gruber's edition appeared only seven years later. It was a German translation of the chronicle by a schoolmaster from the Estonian island of Ösel (Est. Saaremaa), Johann Gottfried Arndt. The editor was deeply concerned with making his edition acceptable to the authorities of the Russian empire. Listing on the title page the nations whose history the chronicle touched, Russians were named first, followed by Germans, Swedes, Danes, Estonians, Livs, Latvians, Lithuanians, Curonians and Semgals.⁴⁰ Arndt's edition was dedicated to the then Russian empress Elizabeth (r. 1741–62) and the introduction by the translator stressed the happy and peaceful state in which this province existed under Russian rule.⁴¹

As the main reason for editing the chronicle, Arndt stressed the need to make the Latin text available in a German translation.⁴² He also held the chronicle of Russow to be too old and the chronicle of Kelch insufficient to satisfy the historically interested reader. However, Arndt had a more ambitious plan than just editing a single chronicle: he was attempting to present through chronicles and other sources a complete narrative of medieval Livonian history. Henry's chronicle was only the first part of his edition, and conveyed the history of the province under its first bishops. The second part of the edition was put together using different sources and covered later Livonian history under the Masters of the Teutonic Order and the bishops.⁴³

³⁹ For example, *Origines Livoniae*, p. 96: 'Est autem Rotalia regiuncula in ora Estoniae maritima, Osiliae insulae obiecta, quae ora Maritima Teutonice die Strand-wyck, Estonice Löne-ma vocatur: in qua parochia Rotaliensis, Estonice Riddalikirrik, pristinum nomen retinet.'

⁴⁰ *Der Liefländischen Chronik Erster Theil von Liefland unter seinen ersten Bischöfen, welcher die alte Geschichte der Russen, Deutschen, Schweden, Dänen, Esthen, Liven, Letten, Litthauer, Curen und Semgallen erleutet. Oder die Origines Livoniae sacrae et civilis, wie solche der königl. Hofrath und Bibliothekarius zu Hannover Herr Johann Daniel Gruber, aus einem alten Manuscript Lateinisch herausgegeben und mit gelehrten Noten versehen, nunmehr aber aus andern Handschriften ergänzt, mit der nöthigsten Anzeige der verschiedenen Lesearten wie auch mit kurzen Anmerkungen begleitet und ins Deutsche übersetzt von Johann Gottfried Arndt, der Schule zu Arensburg auf Oesel Rector. Halle im Magdeburg. gedruckt bey Joh. Justinus Gebauer, 1747.*

⁴¹ *Liefländische Chronik*, ed. Arndt (1747), p. c.

⁴² *Liefländische Chronik*, ed. Arndt (1747), pp. cv–c2.

⁴³ *Liefländische Chronik*, ed. Arndt (1747), p. ev: *Der andere Theil, wozu verschiedene Gönner schon manches beyzutragen beliebt, und der eigentlich die Fortsetzung dieses Werks ausmachet, sol die mittlere Geschichte von Liefland unter seinen Heermeistern enthalten, und*

The problems of textual criticism were not unknown to Arndt,⁴⁴ but he did not take them very seriously. One reason for this might have been that he was aware of the inadequacy of the manuscripts known to him and of the limits this set on the possibility of establishing the original text. Arndt used two manuscripts, both of relatively poor quality, which he called the Reval and the Riga manuscripts, and he was able to fill in the gap in Gruber's edition concerning the year 1220.⁴⁵ He rightly stressed the unreliability of the rhetoric, drawing special attention to Henry's exaggerations.⁴⁶

Arndt reproduced Gruber's introduction in full translation.⁴⁷ He also gave credit to Gruber's commentaries and especially his literary style. However, he considered it his duty to enlarge the commentaries by using his own knowledge of local history and circumstances. This was also true of personal names and place names,⁴⁸ although Arndt's commentaries in this field sometimes contain curiosities, such as the connections drawn between the Estonian and Hebrew languages.⁴⁹

die Begebenheiten der folgenden Bischöfe voraus abhandeln (Der Liefländischen Chronik Ander Theil von Liefland unter seinen Herren Meistern, welche die alte Geschichte des Ordens und der benachbarten Völker erleutert.

Sowohl mit Zuziehung der gedruckten und ungedruckten Schriftsteller aus einer zalreichen Menge alter Documente im Original, beglaubten Copeien und andern Abschriften zusammen getragen: nebst angehängten Tabellen, worinne die Namen der Erz- und Bischöfe von Riga, Revel, Dörpt und Oesel, die Sigille der Ordensgebietiger, die Wapen der liefländischen Städte, das Verzeichnis aller ehemaligen Schlösser, wie auch alle zur Zeit der Ordens und nachher geprägte auch noch vorhandene Münzen aus den berühmtesten Cabinetten gesamlet etc. beschrieben von Johann Gottfried Arndt des Kaiserlichen Lycei zu Riga Conrector. Halle im Magdeburgischen, gedruckt bey Johann Justinus Gebauer. 1753).

⁴⁴ See *Liefländische Chronik*, ed. Arndt (1747), pp. c2v–dv.

⁴⁵ The Reval manuscript is marked as R₁ by Arbusow and the Riga manuscript as w₁. See, regarding these manuscripts, Arbusow, 'Die Handschriftliche Überlieferung', 15, pp. 190–91.

⁴⁶ *Liefländische Chronik*, ed. Arndt (1747), pp. d2v–e: 'Sonderlich darf man unter dem Lesen an den meisten Stellen sich keine grossen Vorstellungen von Armeen, Schlössern, Schlachten, Städten und solchen Wörtern machen, die eine Vielheit oder Grösse bedeuten, weil der Zusammenhang weiset, daß sieben Personen eine Menge heissen, von denen gar noch viele auf dem Platze geblieben.'

⁴⁷ *Liefländische Chronik*, ed. Arndt (1747), pp. g–h2v: *Vörrede des Herrn Hofrath Grubers*.

⁴⁸ *Liefländische Chronik*, ed. Arndt (1747), pp. c2v, d.

⁴⁹ See *Liefländische Chronik*, ed. Arndt (1747), p. 94: '... und paßirten den Fluß, der die Mutter der Gewässer^o) hiest ...'; p. 95: ^o) Ein Fluß bey Dorpat, wo der Peipus- und die Wurznische See an einander stossen. Bey der Liven heist er Emmajoeggi, bey der Deutschen

The Nineteenth Century

The situation of historical research in the Baltic provinces in the middle of the nineteenth century can be characterized using the words of the secretary of the *Estländische Ritterschaft* and amateur historian Georg von Brevern (1807–92) in 1842:

The history of the Livonian confederation in the Middle Ages has until now been known only as far as our chroniclers have been able to understand and retell it. That means that we are informed about a certain series of events which are almost exclusively connected to wars held between the Livonians themselves or with their powerful neighbours. We still totally lack a real historiography, and this cannot be otherwise, because an understanding of the history, at least of the political one, was absent from the works of earlier researchers in the field of the past: the sources from which they alone could derive the knowledge of the inner development of the political life of Old Livonia was partly unknown to them, partly beyond their reach.⁵⁰

This severe attitude had its roots in the fact that the use of charters and other sources apart from chronicles was still relatively limited among the local historians of the 1840s. Although documents other than chronicles had been, to some extent, known and used,⁵¹ few of them had been published. However, the lack of comparison between different sources and the prevalence of pure narrative, Brevern's main concerns, eventually led to a more profound analysis of the very same narrative sources.

The tradition created by Gruber and Arndt was continued by August Hansen (1813–49). Hansen edited Gruber's Latin text, adding his own German translation, introduction and commentaries.⁵² This edition was still heavily

Embek, bey unserm Verfasser, der da wuste, daß die erste Hälfte des Wortes im Hebräischen***) eine Mutter bedeute, heist er mater aquarum, also ob man sagte: Mutterbach.

***) So heist auch die Mutter bey den Esthen, Emma, indem die Esthnische Sprache einige Hebräische Wörter, die Finnische noch mehr, beybehalten.'

⁵⁰ Georg von Brevern, 'Urkunden zur Geschichte des Bisthums Reval', in *Archiv für die Geschichte Liv-, Esth- und Curlands*, ed. Friedrich Georg von Bunge, vol. I (Dorpat, 1842), pp. 239–321 (here 239).

⁵¹ See Hubertus Nieschäffer, 'Geschichtsschreibung in Zeitalter der Aufklärung', in *Geschichte der deutschbaltischen Geschichtsschreibung*, ed. Georg von Rauch (Cologne and Vienna, 1986), pp. 63–85.

⁵² *Origines Livoniae sacrae et civilis: Heinrich's des Letten älteste Chronik von Livland*, ed. August Heinrich Hansen, in *Scriptores rerum Livonicarum*, vol. I (Riga and Leipzig, 1853, repr. Riga, 1857).

dependent on two previous ones: although Hansen added his own introduction, he also included both Gruber's dedication and introduction.

Hansen was the first editor to divide the text of the chronicle into 30 chapters – the division also used today – and to establish a correct chronology of events.⁵³ Although his edition (or, more correctly, his introduction) has often been considered the first step towards scientific publication of the chronicle,⁵⁴ his attitude towards the chronicle was basically not different from that of his eighteenth-century predecessors. To improve the Latin text, Hansen used Arndt's additions to the text edited by Gruber, and made some improvements of his own, using a Dorpat manuscript.⁵⁵ But neither Gruber nor Hansen, who were both acquainted with different manuscripts, ever tried to establish connections between them.

Hansen's edition appeared in the series *Scriptores rerum Livonicarum*, in which several chronicles of medieval Livonian history were published. Following the example of Gruber (which was, although to a lesser extent, also followed by Arndt), he added an extensive document appendix (*Silva documentorum*) to his edition. This was done in cooperation with the pastor, historian and teacher from Riga, Carl Eduard Napiersky (1793–1864).

A great step forward in research on the chronicle was brought about by the discovery of the *Codex Zamoscianus* by August Bielowski in 1862.⁵⁶ This event laid the foundations for the efforts whose aim was not only to reconstruct the logical structure of the narrative, but to establish a text which would be as close as possible to the lost original. In 1865, the *Codex Zamoscianus* was loaned for three months to Baron Robert von Toll, who had been interested in it since he first learned about the manuscript in 1862, and it was brought from Warsaw to Estonia. Here Carl Schirren almost immediately (in December 1865) published the amendments to the traditional text using the freshly discovered manuscript.⁵⁷

⁵³ Генрих Латвийский, Хроника Ливонии, trans. Anninski (1938₁), pp. 1–2. See also Arbusow, 'Die Handschriftliche Überlieferung', 15, p. 190; *Heinrich's von Lettland Livländische Chronik, ein getreuer Bericht, wie das Christentum und die deutsche Herrschaft sich im Lande der Liven, Letten und Ehsten Bahn gebrochen*, trans. Eduard Pabst (Reval, 1867), p. VII.

⁵⁴ See Генрих Латвийский, Хроника Ливонии, trans. Anninski (1938₁), p. 2.

⁵⁵ This manuscript (*Codex Knüpferi*) from 1660 has been marked as 'k' by Arbusow. See Arbusow, 'Die Handschriftliche Überlieferung', 15, p. 190.

⁵⁶ See, regarding this discovery, for example, Arbusow, 'Die Handschriftliche Überlieferung', 15, p. 190.

⁵⁷ Carl Schirren, *Der Codex Zamoscianus, enthaltend Capitel I–XXIII, 8. der Origines Livoniae* (Dorpat, 1865). See also *Heinrich's von Lettland Livländische Chronik*, trans. Pabst (1867), pp. X–XI.

The results of this work were first used in a German translation of the chronicle by a historian from Reval, Eduard Pabst (1815–82). This translation appeared in 1867.⁵⁸ Although Pabst made serious efforts to establish a correct text of the chronicle, he did not incorporate the reconstructed Latin text into his edition. The heading of Pabst's edition is very eloquent: it states that the chronicle is 'the rightful story of how Christianity and German rule made its way to the land of the Livs, Letts and Estonians.'⁵⁹ This wording is very similar to Gruber's and shows no change in the attitudes of the editors towards the subject matter of the chronicle for more than a century. The edition is dedicated to the Estonian Literary Society, of which Pabst was an active member, and to the *Estländische Ritterschaft*. After the British king and the Russian empress named on the title pages of previous editions, this was a relatively modest dedication.

According to Pabst, Gruber's commentaries, reproduced by nineteenth-century historians, were considered highly reliable and had acquired almost as authoritative a position as the actual text of the chronicle. And only in the most recent times had it been noticed how much was still to be done, both in connection with Henry's chronicle and in research into Livonian history more generally.⁶⁰

The problem involving text reconstruction and the use of different manuscripts is one of the central issues of Pabst's introduction.⁶¹ He considered the establishment of the improved text of the chronicle to be one of his greatest achievements. However, Pabst identified the main aim of his edition as that of making the chronicle available in a good German translation. By this time, he had already acquired experience in translating narrative sources, having been encouraged by the success of his translation of the chronicle of Balthasar Russow.⁶² Using the German language, Pabst tried to convey the style and peculiarities of Henry's text. Later, this approach received criticism which cannot be fully justified.⁶³ According to Pabst, the commentaries of the old editions of Henry's chronicle contained a lot of what he called *gelehrter Ballast*.⁶⁴ His own commentaries, both textual and historical, are very modest in number and length.

⁵⁸ *Heinrich's von Lettland Livländische Chronik*, trans. Pabst (1867).

⁵⁹ See footnote 53 above.

⁶⁰ *Heinrich's von Lettland Livländische Chronik*, trans. Pabst (1867), p. VIII.

⁶¹ See *Heinrich's von Lettland Livländische Chronik*, trans. Pabst (1867), pp. X–XI.

⁶² *Balthasar Russow's Livländische Chronik*, trans. Eduard Pabst (Reval, 1845).

⁶³ See, regarding this, Генрих Латвийский, Хроника Ливонии, trans. Anninski (1938), pp. 4–5.

⁶⁴ *Heinrich's von Lettland Livländische Chronik*, trans. Pabst (1867), pp. V–VII.

Seven years after Pabst's edition, in 1874, the German historian Wilhelm Arndt (1838–95) published a Latin edition of the chronicle with an introduction and commentaries in Latin.⁶⁵ The introduction to this edition is mainly devoted to the manuscripts of the chronicle, their codicological and textual characteristics, the personality of the chronicler, and his motives, education and language use.

The text established by Arndt, although not ideal according to later standards, was the best reconstruction of the chronicle available at that time and his overview of the manuscripts was better than in any previous edition. Arndt used the *Codex Zamoscianus* as the basis of his text and made amendments to it using other manuscripts.⁶⁶ His commentaries are very scarce, being mainly restricted to personal and place names. The edition also lacks notes on textual criticism; the editor gives only some references to the Bible.

On the question of the chronicler's nationality, Arndt disagreed with the view of the Baltic-German historians who believed that Henry was a German. He considered Henry to be a Latvian, using the same linguistic argument as Pabst – namely the meaning of the Latin prefix *de* – only interpreting it in the opposite way.⁶⁷

The end of the nineteenth century added three translations to the history of the editions of the chronicle. These are the Russian translation by Jevgraf Cheshihin (1824–88) from 1876, the Estonian translation by the amateur archaeologist Jaan Jung (1835–1900) from 1881 to 1883⁶⁸ and the Latvian translation by the historian and ethnographer Matīss Siliņš (1861–1942) from 1883.⁶⁹ All these editions were, in one or another way, inspired by the growth of national movements characteristic of that period,⁷⁰ and all have become bibliographical rarities.

The Russian translation by Jevgraf Cheshihin⁷¹ was not made from the Latin text, but from the German translation by Eduard Pabst, and it was published

⁶⁵ See footnote 5 above.

⁶⁶ See Arbusow, 'Die Handschriftliche Überlieferung', 15, pp. 190–93.

⁶⁷ *Heinrici Chronicon Lyvoniae*, ed. Arndt (1874₂), pp. XVI–XVIII. The thesis of the Latvian origin of Henry is also supported by Hermann Hildebrand. See Hermann Hildebrand, *Die Chronik Heinrichs von Lettland. Ein Beitrag zu Livlands Historiographie und Geschichte* (Berlin, 1865), pp. 165–70.

⁶⁸ *Lāti Hendriku Liiui maa kroonika ehk Aja raamat*, trans. Jaan Jung (Tartu, 1881–83).

⁶⁹ *Latviešu Indriķa kronika*, trans. Matīss Siliņš (Riga, 1883).

⁷⁰ See, for example, Kaspars Kļaviņš, 'Die Interpretationen des Mittelalters in Lettland während des nationalen Erwachens der Letten', *Baltica: Die Vierteljahresschrift für Baltische Kultur* 3 (2000), 10–21, and Chapter 17 by Linda Kaljundi (in collaboration with Kaspars Kļaviņš) in this volume.

⁷¹ Генриха латышского ливонская хроника, верный рассказ о том, какъ христианство и немецкое господство проложили себе путь въ земли ливовъ, латышей и эстовъ. По рукописямъ, съ исправлениями поврежденныхъ текстовъ, съ латинского

in the anthology *Collection of Materials and Articles on the History of the Baltic Provinces* (Russ. *Сборник материалов и статей по истории Прибалтийского края*). Due to the translator's poor knowledge of German, this translation contains many errors and curiosities. In the 1930s, the other Russian editor of Henry's chronicle, Sergei Anninski, became the most ardent critic of Cheshihin's translation.⁷² Among other things, Anninski stressed that Cheshihin's edition could be used by the Russifiers of his period but not by historians. *Collection of Materials and Articles on the History of the Baltic Provinces*, published by Cheshihin, is, however, a controversial publication. The general style of its introduction serves, without doubt, the interests of Russification, while the content of the publication aims to make the more important Baltic chronicles and the best studies of Baltic-German historians available to the Russian reader.

The First Half of the Twentieth Century

One of the main landmarks in the development of the research on Henry's text was the textual criticism carried out by Leonid Arbusow. Although previous researchers such as Carl Schirren, Eduard Pabst and Wilhelm Arndt had made use in their works of more important textual variations in different manuscripts of the chronicle, it was Arbusow who clearly listed all useful varieties and analysed their origins. In one or another way, every edition of the chronicle subsequent to the appearance of Arbusow's 'Die Handschriftliche Überlieferung' in 1926–27⁷³ have taken advantage of it. In addition to purely textual research, the growing political use of the chronicle and popular interest in it should not be forgotten. The approach to the chronicle had never been free from political influence. However, the turbulent events of the twentieth century, which closely touched the nations whose history the chronicle concerns, provided a basis for political abuse of Henry's text.

на немецкий языкъ перевелъ и объяснилъ Эдуардъ Пабст. Книга издана Пабстомъ въ Ревеле 10 июня 1867 года къ празднованию 25-ти лѣтъ Эстляндскаго Литературнаго Общества, и посвящена переводчикомъ Эстляндскому дворянству, in *Сборник материалов и статей по истории Прибалтийского края*, vol. 1 (Riga, 1876), pp. 65–285. The translation first appeared in parts in the newspaper *Рижский Вестник* in 1873: *Генриха латвийскаго Ливонская хроника*, trans. Jevgraf Cheshihin, *Рижский Вестник*, 1873, nos 145, 147, 150, 154, 156, 163, 165, 168, 170, 174, 176, 178, 179, 181, 183, 184–7, 189 (chapters 1–30). See also Генрих Латвийский, *Хроника Ливонии*, trans. Anninski (1938₁), p. 5.

⁷² See Генрих Латвийский, *Хроника Ливонии*, trans. Anninski (1938₁), pp. 5–6.

⁷³ See footnote 8 above.

One of the most politically 'loaded' publications of Henry's chronicle is the edition of Sergei Anninski from 1938,⁷⁴ the most recent Russian edition of the chronicle. This was the first edition to take advantage of the textual criticism of Leonid Arbusow. The edition contains a preface by V. Bystrianski, an introduction by Anninski, a Russian translation, a Latin text (based on Arbusow's work) and commentaries. Anninski's introduction to the chronicle is longer and more detailed than in other editions. It concentrates on all the traditional topics, such as manuscripts and earlier editions, the personality, writing motives and language use of the chronicler, and the events described in the chronicle. Anninski's commentaries are remarkably extensive. A large number of them are devoted to the details of Russian history.

However, from the point of view of ideological use of the chronicle, the most startling part of this publication is the preface by V. Bystrianski, which reflects trends in Soviet Russian political thought during the 1930s. The preface is entirely, and dramatically, devoted to the ideological fight against Nazi Germany. The chronicle is presented as illustrative historical material about the aggressive nature of Germany. The future German aggression against the Soviet Union, which at that time still lay three years ahead, was presented as inevitable. From the very beginning of the preface, one gets the impression that the ethnic population of the Baltic countries already belonged to the Soviet Union, although the Baltic countries were actually occupied by the Soviet Union only two years later, in 1940. The way in which both Germany and Russia considered the territory of the Baltic countries to be their natural and lawful possession has been well documented. Neither the ethnic population of Estonia or Latvia nor Baltic-Germans were given a part in this rivalry between the two great powers. Step by step the introduction, however, reveals that the independent Baltic states did still exist in 1938. However, they are treated as victims of Nazi propaganda, which used thirteenth-century history to support its arguments.⁷⁵ Although none of this sounds very original to those familiar with Soviet propaganda, it is remarkable how vigorously it is expressed in the preface to the chronicle.

The introduction by Anninski does not follow the style of the preface. It is a scientific and mostly neutral text, although credit had to be given to the current political demands. Anninski writes:

⁷⁴ See footnote 31 above. Anninski's translation also appeared without the Latin text, with Russian text only. See Генрих Латвийский, *Хроника Ливонии*, trans. Sergei Anninski (Moscow and Leningrad, 1938).

⁷⁵ See the preface by Bystrianski: Генрих Латвийский, *Хроника Ливонии*, trans. Anninski (1938₁), pp. V–XV.

In our day, two reasons focus anew, and with great force, special attention on the chronicle: firstly, the appearance of new national states in the Baltic territory, and in connection with this, the appearance of new historiographical demands and, secondly, the open and active intention of Germany to place these new states under its influence or even to subjugate these new Baltic states, and in connection with this, the attempts to find a historical basis for the lawfulness of this conquest.⁷⁶

Anninski was highly competent in, and had great esteem for, German and Baltic-German historiography. The establishment of the correct text of the chronicle was very important to the editor.⁷⁷ Anninski discusses the socio-political position of the chronicler at length. This is one of the most obvious traces of the Marxist historical approach in his edition. The editor describes Henry in the following way: 'According to his historical perception of the world, the author of the chronicle was, beyond doubt, primitive. He was not a thinker or a scholar, but only a cleric of the thirteenth century, a Catholic and a German.'⁷⁸

The introduction does not contain an overview of the local ethnic population of the Baltics, although a Russian reader of the 1930s was, inevitably, poorly informed about this topic. However, due to the origin of the editor, Anninski's edition presents the chronicle as a historical document concerning different ethnic groups, not a heroic narrative of one particular nation, as in some other national editions.

From the point of view of textual criticism, the most important edition of the chronicle was published in 1955 by Leonid Arbusow and Albert Bauer. In 1959, it appeared with a German translation by Bauer and reduced commentaries.⁷⁹ The text established by Arbusow has become canonical for all subsequent editors and translators of the chronicle. In the introduction to the edition of 1955, the text edited by Gruber is called 'a false one, which, as it had to stay in use up till 1867, caused much misunderstanding'.⁸⁰ This remark is a little too severe. As mentioned earlier, Gruber was well aware of the insufficiency of his text.

⁷⁶ Генрих Латвийский, Хроника Ливонии, trans. Anninski (1938), p. 66.

⁷⁷ Генрих Латвийский, Хроника Ливонии, trans. Anninski (1938), p. 1.

⁷⁸ Генрих Латвийский, Хроника Ливонии, trans. Anninski (1938), p. 47.

⁷⁹ *Heinrich von Lettland. Livländische Chronik*, ed. and trans. Albert Bauer (Ausgewählte Quellen zur deutschen Geschichte des Mittelalters 24) (Darmstadt, 1959 – further marked as 1959, repr. 1975; Würzburg, 1959).

⁸⁰ *Chronicon Livoniae*, ed. Arbusow and Bauer (1955), p. XLVIII.

Albert Bauer, the author of the introduction to both editions (1955 and 1959), announces at the very beginning of his introduction that the author of the chronicle was a German,⁸¹ although no definite decision can be made on this question due to the lack of sources. Henry is the main hero of Bauer's introduction. Bauer devotes much attention to his origin, his activities and his possible part in the events described in the chronicle.⁸² At the same time, it is not, even on an elementary level, explained who the people were against whom the Germans fought and where exactly the events of the chronicle took place. He treats the local ethnic population as some primitive group of people who need to be mentioned only to describe the activities of the Germans. Local geographical realities and place names are ignored in the introduction. Thus the text of the chronicle could be fully understandable only to a medievalist of Baltic-German origin, not to the average German reader.

Some details of the local geography and ethnic groups are given in commentaries to the text, although these are inconsequential. Local equivalents for German forms of local place names are sometimes mentioned, sometimes not. In some cases, assumptions are presented as true facts.⁸³ The content of the chronicle is summed up very briefly: 'It is about the Livonian mission in war and peace, as experienced by Henry himself, during the years 1205–27, as one of its participants, complemented by the history of the conversion of the Livs during the times of the bishops Meinhard and Bertold, and in the first years of the reign of Albert.'⁸⁴ Bauer considered the literary level of the chronicle to be low,⁸⁵ although he devoted a great deal of attention to the language and style of the chronicle.⁸⁶

In his German translation of 1959, Bauer did not intend to convey the variety of the titles of different persons occurring in the original text, simply replacing them by more widespread German quasi-equivalents.⁸⁷ His aim was to make the chronicle easily readable for the German public, not to experiment with the possibilities of the German language in order to follow the nuances of the text.

⁸¹ *Heinrich von Lettland. Livländische Chronik*, ed. and trans. Bauer (1959₁), p. IX.

⁸² *Heinrich von Lettland. Livländische Chronik*, ed. and trans. Bauer (1959₁), esp. pp. IX–XVI, XVIII–XXI.

⁸³ See, for example, *Heinrich von Lettland. Livländische Chronik*, ed. and trans. Bauer (1959₁), p. 7, comm. 8.

⁸⁴ *Heinrich von Lettland. Livländische Chronik*, ed. and trans. Bauer (1959₁), p. XX.

⁸⁵ *Heinrich von Lettland. Livländische Chronik*, ed. and trans. Bauer (1959₁), p. XXX.

⁸⁶ *Heinrich von Lettland. Livländische Chronik*, ed. and trans. Bauer (1959₁), pp. XXVIII–XXX.

⁸⁷ *Heinrich von Lettland. Livländische Chronik*, ed. and trans. Bauer (1959₁), p. XXXIV.

The Second Half of the Twentieth Century

The second half of the twentieth century saw a growth in popular interest in the chronicle or, to be more precise, a growth in interest by its editors in making the chronicle available to the general public. This conformed with a more general trend toward making old texts available in modern vernaculars for scholarly use. This may, perhaps, also be connected with a gradual change in the character of education after World War II. More and more people were educated highly enough to be interested in historical sources, but not highly enough to read them in the original.

During the second half of the twentieth century, five original translations of the chronicle appeared. Four of them were based on the text established by Leonid Arbusow. The English translation by James Brundage, which appeared in 1961, was completed by the end of 1951 – before the appearance of Arbusow's text, in other words. Brundage's translation was based on the text established by Wilhelm Arndt, and the edition of Arbusow and Bauer was used only for 'scattered emendations'.⁸⁸ The aim of Brundage's edition was to make an interesting historical document available to the English-speaking reader. In contrast to the German, Estonian and Russian translators before him, the editor had no close and personal relationship to the subject matter. Therefore, the whole presentation, from the introduction to the commentaries, is more balanced than in most of the previous editions.

In 1962, an Estonian translation by Julius Mägiste, an exiled specialist in Finno-Ugric languages, appeared in Sweden.⁸⁹ The translator's aims were not those of a scholar, but of a man of letters in a broader sense. His introduction and commentaries are very modest in length and number.⁹⁰ Mägiste paid special attention to the linguistic side of the chronicle. He tried to convey not only the content of the narrative, but also the style of the text, with all its good and bad sides.

An Estonian edition of central importance appeared in 1982.⁹¹ It contains a Latin text according to Arbusow's reconstruction, an Estonian translation by

⁸⁸ *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, trans. James A. Brundage (Madison, 1961, 2nd edn with a new introduction, notes and bibliography, New York and Chichester, 2003), p. xxxi (cited after the 2003 edition).

⁸⁹ *Henriku Liivimaa kroonika*, trans. Julius Mägiste (Stockholm, 1962, repr. Tallinn, 2008).

⁹⁰ See *Henriku Liivimaa kroonika*, trans. Mägiste (1962), pp. 5–9.

⁹¹ See footnote 14 above.

the classical philologist Richard Kleis,⁹² and an introduction and commentaries by Enn Tarvel. It is not easy to characterize the style of this publication.⁹³ The Estonian translation, the absence of text-critical notes and the modest number and length of the commentaries are typical of a popular edition. On the other hand, the introduction, although relatively short, is in some places complicated for a general reader. At the same time, a scholarly reader would regret the absence of literary references in the introduction and in the commentaries. The edition is a combination of the scientific competence of the editor and the rules dictated by the editorial policy of Soviet Estonia during the 1980s.

According to Tarvel, the main aim of the chronicler was to depict the fight for Christianity, not the political events or administrative and economic life of the conquered territories.⁹⁴ The editor deals only briefly with all the canonical topics of the introduction: the personality and origin of the chronicler, the structure and content of the chronicle, and its manuscripts, editions and translation problems.⁹⁵ His attention is focused on the evidence that the chronicle gives concerning the social order among the local peoples before the German conquest.⁹⁶ Explaining the motives for the publication of the new edition, Tarvel mentioned that the need for a new Estonian translation was very urgent, while previous Estonian translations were both not readily available and did not meet the needs of a good publication.⁹⁷ He especially stressed the need for correct interpretation of separate words and word combinations used by the chronicle, and this provides information about local ethnic groups which cannot be found in other sources.⁹⁸ This attitude is contrary to the translation principles of Bauer, who simply tried to find a smooth German translation for Henry's terminology, but not always an adequate equivalent of a specific term. Tarvel concentrates scrupulously on the possibilities offered by the terminology used in the chronicle. According to Tarvel, the chronicle provides no basis for the conception of early pre-conquest feudalism in the eastern Baltic states (in the ninth or tenth to twelfth centuries) as was elaborated in Soviet historical science during the 1950s.⁹⁹

⁹² The translation was completed by the beginning of the 1960s. See Sulev Vahtre and Evald Tõnisson, 'Kaua oodatud kroonika lugeja laual', *Keel ja Kirjandus* 7 (1983), 384–9 (here 387).

⁹³ See criticism of this publication: Vahtre and Tõnisson, 'Kaua oodatud kroonika'.

⁹⁴ *Henriku Liivimaa kroonika*, trans. Kleis, ed. Tarvel (1982), p. 9.

⁹⁵ *Henriku Liivimaa kroonika*, trans. Kleis, ed. Tarvel (1982), pp. 5–21.

⁹⁶ *Henriku Liivimaa kroonika*, trans. Kleis, ed. Tarvel (1982), p. 17.

⁹⁷ *Henriku Liivimaa kroonika*, trans. Kleis, ed. Tarvel (1982), p. 16.

⁹⁸ *Henriku Liivimaa kroonika*, trans. Kleis, ed. Tarvel (1982), p. 18.

⁹⁹ *Henriku Liivimaa kroonika*, trans. Kleis, ed. Tarvel (1982), p. 18.

The editor sums up his introduction with the following words: 'A hundred years later, an old translation [of Jaan Jung] is in no way able to convey the riches of the chronicle. Now Henry's Livonian chronicle, in a substantial translation by Richard Kleis, will become available to all the reading Estonian nation, who can from it, through the past, find pride, bravery and strength for the future.'¹⁰⁰ For the Estonian reader of the 1980s, Henry's chronicle was not simply an interesting historical narrative, an eloquent and rare historical source, containing data which could not be found elsewhere, but also a source of national pride and personal dignity.

New translations into Baltic languages – a Lithuanian one by Juozas Jurginis from 1991,¹⁰¹ and a Latvian one by Ābrams Feldhūns with an introduction and commentaries by Ēvalds Mugurēvičs from 1993¹⁰² – both date from a period when Soviet ideological pressure was no longer present in historical research. Due to Mugurēvičs' main field of research, his edition has a very strong archaeological orientation. The data obtained from archaeological excavations carried out in Latvian territory are compared to the information of the chronicle. Both the introduction and the commentaries are, to a large extent, devoted to material culture, especially to specific details of weapons and other instruments of war. The introduction of the Latvian edition discusses, among other things, the traces of influence of the Baltic nations in northern Germany, in the territory from which the Livonian pilgrims were recruited and from which the chronicler might also have come. The fact that Henry could have been born near Magdeburg does not incontrovertibly mean, according to Mugurēvičs, that he was a German. He might also have been of Baltic origin.¹⁰³

According to the editor, the chronicle describes the subjugation of the Livs of Dūna and Gauja, of the western Latgals, and partly also of the Semgals and Estonians. At the same time, almost two-thirds of the chronicle is devoted to the fight against the Estonians! Estonian research has paid relatively modest attention to the role of the Latgals in the chronicle or has not done this in a very friendly way.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ *Henriku Liivimaa kroonika*, trans. Kleis, ed. Tarvel (1982), p. 21.

¹⁰¹ *Henrikas Latvīšs, Hermanas Vārtbergē. Livonijas kronika*, trans. Juozas Jurginis (Vilnius, 1991).

¹⁰² *Indriķa hronika*, trans. Ābrams Feldhūns, notes and introduction Ēvalds Mugurēvičs (Riga, 1993).

¹⁰³ *Indriķa hronika*, trans. Feldhūns, ed. Mugurēvičs, pp. 444–5.

¹⁰⁴ See, for example, Sulev Vahtre, *Muinasaja loojang Eestis: Vabadusvõitlus 1208–1227* (Tallinn, 1990), pp. 55, 60–62.

The Twenty-First Century

The continuing popular interest in Henry's chronicle during the last decade has resulted in reprints of earlier translations and two new translations – Finnish and Italian. Of these editions, only the Italian one contains a Latin text and a longer scientific introduction.¹⁰⁵

In 2003 the 1961 English edition was reissued with a new introduction.¹⁰⁶ Like many other editors, James Brundage stresses the importance of the chronicle as a source of facts: 'Henry's chronicle provides the only surviving evidence for many episodes in the early stages of Western Christendom's expansion into the eastern Baltic.'¹⁰⁷ The sympathy of the editor seems to be on the side of the indigenous population.¹⁰⁸ He also does his best to identify the place names mentioned in the chronicle, using Latvian and Estonian place names (although sometimes confusing different languages).¹⁰⁹ Brundage analyses, in detail, the events described at the beginning of the chronicle. The further he moves into the chronicle, the less detailed his analysis becomes.

Due to his personal scientific interest, Brundage pays a great deal of attention to the problems of canon law. He handles the text from the current viewpoint of the crusade movement: 'Religious conversion of the population was a primary goal of the crusaders in the Baltic. Crusades in this region, unlike those in the Holy Land, were missionary enterprises from the outset.'¹¹⁰ From the point of view of the forcefully converted, this would sound a bit too idealistic.

Concerning Henry's personality and his motives for writing, Brundage relies fully on earlier authors.¹¹¹ The aim of Brundage's translation is to offer the English reader a readable text, not to try to convey all the characteristics of the original language use, as was attempted in the translations of Pabst or Mägiste.

In 2003 a Finnish translation of the chronicle by Maijastina Kahlos and Raija Sarasti-Wilenius appeared, with a long introduction by Seppo Zetterberg.¹¹² The practical aim of this edition, as with many others, was to convey the text of an interesting historical source to the editors' compatriots in their native tongue.

¹⁰⁵ Enrico di Lettonia, *Chronicon Livoniae. La crociata del Nord (1184–1227)*, trans. Piero Bugiani, preface by Pietro U. Dini (Livorno, 2005).

¹⁰⁶ See footnote 88 above.

¹⁰⁷ *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, ed. Brundage (2003), p. xiv.

¹⁰⁸ See, for example, *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, ed. Brundage (2003), p. xxxiii.

¹⁰⁹ See, for example, *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, ed. Brundage (2003), p. xxiii.

¹¹⁰ *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, ed. Brundage (2003), p. xxiv.

¹¹¹ *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, ed. Brundage (2003), pp. xxv–xxvii.

¹¹² *Henrikin Liivinmaan kronikka*, trans. Maijastina Kahlos and Raija Sarasti-Wilenius, introduction Seppo Zetterberg (Helsinki, 2003).

Final Remarks

Since the middle of the nineteenth century, the supposedly 'correct' text of Henry's chronicle has been the goal of scientific editions, and 'correctness' has been one of the most important criteria in evaluating them. A certain form of the reconstructed text has become canonized and everything that does not conform to it tends to be pushed aside in learned circles, to be seen as simplicity and incompetence or '*gelerbter Ballast*'. The early editions of Gruber and Arndt attract very little scientific interest. As a result, many details connected with the methods of research and the understanding of both historical events and the intellectual climate contemporaneous with old editions have been unjustly discarded.

However serious the flaws in early editions might be, the editing of Henry's chronicle nevertheless started as a scientific project, and remained such till the second half of the nineteenth century, when national movements gained strength and popular interest in historical sources increased. These tendencies resulted in translations into languages other than German.

The twentieth century saw the development of scientific, as well as popular and ideological, interest in Henry's text. In 1962 Julius Mägiste characterized the chronicle in the following way: '[it is] a heroic-tragic description of the Estonian thirteenth-century fight for independence, which is of exceptional importance in considering the history of our land and nation.'¹¹³ In present-day circumstances, when Estonia has regained its independence, this quote has lost much of its relevance in historical research. New interpretations and approaches, focused on the crusade movement around the Baltic Sea and the embracing of the Baltics by Western culture, aim to demonstrate the natural connection of this territory and its population to the European sphere of influence.

From the very early editions on, Henry's chronicle has been an instrument of ideology in the hands of different political powers and interest groups. Germans and Russians, Christians, atheists and nationalists have all given contradictory explanations of their rights by using the same chronicle. Henry wrote, either with clear intentions or simply because of his surroundings and education, with a strong ideological orientation. And, perhaps because of this very fact, his text will never escape ideological interpretation, no matter which ideology approaches the chronicle next.

¹¹³ *Henriku Liivimaa kroonika*, trans. Mägiste (1962), p. 5.

Chapter 17

The Chronicler and the Modern World: Henry of Livonia and the Baltic Crusades in the Enlightenment and National Traditions

Linda Kaljundi, with the collaboration of Kaspars Kļaviņš¹

Introduction

When the author of the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia ended his text in 1227, rejoicing: ‘return with joy, O Rigans! Brilliantly triumphal victory always follows you’,² he had completed a founding narrative for the new Christian colony in Livonia. Considering its strong legitimizing agenda, the chronicle could have provided a magnificent example of the functionality of historiography in the construction of regional identities.³ However, Henry’s role in making memory for the elite communities in medieval Livonia was soon minimized due to the rivalry of the archbishopric of Riga and the Teutonic Order.⁴ The chronicle excited little curiosity until the late Enlightenment.⁵ In the nineteenth century, it was, nevertheless, rediscovered as the *Ur*-text of the Baltic communities, progressively overshadowing all other medieval and early modern chronicles. Yet, as in the medieval period, the modern adoption of Henry’s narrative of things past has not meant merely embracing it with joy.

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² HCL XXX.6, p. 222; Brundage, p. 246.

³ Cf. Patrick J. Geary, ‘Reflections on Historiography and the Holy: Center and Periphery’, in *The Making of Christian Myths in the Periphery of Latin Christendom (ca 1000–1300)*, ed. Lars Boje Mortensen (Copenhagen, 2006), pp. 323–30 (here 323).

⁴ See Chapter 14 by Anti Selart in this volume.

⁵ See Chapter 15 by Stefan Donecker in this volume.

This chapter discusses the dialogue between Henry's chronicle and the Baltic-German, Latvian and Estonian national cultural memories from the nineteenth century to the present, arguing that the uses of the chronicle also reflect broader tendencies in the uses of history in the region of present-day Estonia and Latvia. 'Cultural memory' is a useful category for analysing appropriation histories. According to Jan Assmann's definition, it 'comprises that body of reusable texts, images, and rituals specific to each society in each epoch, whose "cultivation" serves to stabilize and convey that society's self-image'.⁶ However, when analysing nationalist perspectives on Henry, one must consider the cultural roots of nationalism. Departing from the idea that Western nationalism is a symptom of the Enlightenment,⁷ this chapter will briefly also discuss the Enlightenment view of the Livonian Middle Ages. In addition, the last part of the chapter analyses the relationship of the 'young nations' to the chronicler himself.

While each of these perspectives of Baltic conversion history differed considerably, the Middle Ages remain a central theme in the historical narrative of them all. For the Baltic-Germans, the crusades and Henry's chronicle constituted their founding legend, thus being of paramount importance for their historical identity. According to the Romanticist and nationalist trends, the Livonian crusade was conceptualized as a part of the civilizing mission of spreading the German *Kulturraum*. The chapter's prime focus, however, is Henry's chronicle's relations with the Latvian and in particular the Estonian cultural memory. Likewise, encouraged by nineteenth-century nationalism, Romanticism, as well as Enlightenment tradition, modern nations are identified with the tribes described by Henry.⁸ Thus, for the young nations the crusades signified the waning of a golden age. Not surprisingly, then, their interpretations often conflict with Baltic-German medievalism, while still centred on the same phenomena: crusade and crusaders (harsh critique of crusading vs. crusade understood as a civilizing endeavour), and ancient local society and culture (mythical golden age of *bons sauvages* vs. brute barbarianism). The genealogy of these imageries shall be discussed, as well as their relationship to contemporary socio-cultural ideals and anxieties. Drawing on Homi Bhabha's remarks on how 'cultural translation' often does not result in comprehension, but rather

⁶ Jan Assmann, 'Collective Memory and Cultural Identity', *New German Critique* 65 (1995), 125–33 (here 132). For a discussion on history as a form of cultural or social memory, see also Peter Burke, 'History as Social Memory', in his *Varieties of Cultural History* (Ithaca, 1997), pp. 43–59.

⁷ See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 2nd rev. edn (London and New York, 2006), esp. pp. 5–36.

⁸ For Henry's tribal representation, see Chapter 3 by Jüri Kivimäe in this volume.

in conflict and anxiety in the (post)colonial situation,⁹ the chapter follows the process and struggles of 'translating' the chronicle for the Latvian and Estonian audience.

Enlightenment Heritages and National Traditions

Even though most of the known manuscripts of Henry's chronicle date to the early modern period (sixteenth and seventeenth centuries), it had little influence on the scholars of an era that witnessed the rise of *ars historica* as a critical discipline. As Anthony Grafton has remarked, this period produced remarkable changes in the attitudes towards historical knowledge, including an understanding that scholars must construct the past from the sources on offer.¹⁰ Even if scholars knew of Henry's chronicle, very few used it in their reconstructions of the Livonian past. The best-known early modern Livonian historian who made significant use of Henry was Thomas Hiärn (1638–78).¹¹ This changed only after the Enlightenment. Ironically, the reception of a chronicle written in Latin, loaded with biblical-liturgical analogies, and striving for the legitimization of the church coincided with the gradual fall of the sacred language and fragmentation of religious communities – which was in turn the first precondition for the rise of nationalism.¹²

In eighteenth-century Livonia, the enthusiasm towards medieval history can be explained with the uses of the Middle Ages for political and moral comment, as well as social rivalry within the nobility.¹³ The critique was also linked to abolishing or reforming the serfdom of the Latvian and Estonian peasants, as the origins of slavery were seen to lie in the crusades. In addition, these views had a religious dimension that combined ideas about 'natural religion' with criticisms

⁹ Homi Bhabha, 'How Newness Enters the World: Postmodern Space, Postcolonial Times and the Trials of Cultural Translation', in his *The Location of Culture* (London and New York, 2007), pp. 303–7.

¹⁰ Anthony Grafton, *What Was History? The Art of History in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 1–61 (here 32–3).

¹¹ Hiärn wrote his Swedish-minded chronicle in the 1670s. See Thomas Hiärn, *Ehst-, Lyf- und Lettländische Geschichte* (Riga, Dorpat and Leipzig, 1835), and Chapter 15 by Stefan Donecker in this volume for further references.

¹² Cf. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p. 19.

¹³ Hubertus Neuschäffer, 'Geschichtsschreibung im Zeitalter der Aufklärung', in *Geschichte der deutschbaltischen Geschichtsschreibung*, ed. Georg von Rauch (Cologne and Vienna, 1986), pp. 63–86 (here 73–5). For an introduction into the Baltic Enlightenment's view of local history, see Kaspars Kļaviņš, 'The Baltic Enlightenment and Perceptions of Medieval Latvian History', *JBS* 29/3 (1998), 213–24.

of the church. Thus, the Enlightenment histories of the Livonian 'Dark Ages' on one hand centred on the negative conceptualization of the crusades, crusaders and Catholic church, and, on the other, on the *bons sauvages* style depictions of the natives. And as these representations became central in social debate, they also contributed considerably towards enlivening the reuse of Henry's chronicle.

The core ideas of the Baltic Enlightenment were produced by three authors: Garlieb Helwig Merkel (1769–1850), August Wilhelm Hupel (1737–1819) and Heinrich Johann von Jannau (1753–1821).¹⁴ They also designed the critical image of the Livonian Middle Ages that (especially in Merkel's version) had great impact on the Estonian and Latvian national histories. Not surprisingly, the Enlightenment authors devoted much effort towards representations of the ancient natives. The later nationalist authors eagerly reused these, even though the discourse of the 'noble savage' was designed for discrediting the nobility.¹⁵ While Merkel's account of the culture and religion of the Old Latvians relied on a mishmash of borrowings,¹⁶ in the Estonian case he departed from *T(h)arapita*, 'the great god of the Öselians' who is mentioned five times in Henry's chronicle.¹⁷ While according to Henry it is a name, since the seventeenth century it has been interpreted as a war cry: 'Taar(a), help us' (Est. *Taar(a) avita*), or even 'Thor, help us' (Est. *Thor avita*), linking it to the fashionable Scandinavian mythologies. Merkel was not alone in this interest, as already by that period *Tharapita* was on its way to becoming one of Henry's most significant contributions to Estonian cultural memory. The identification with Thor was established in the late seventeenth-century chronicles of Thomas Hiärn and Christian Kelch (1657–

¹⁴ Merkel's *Die Letten vorzüglich in Lief- und Ehl-land am Ende des philosophischen Jahrhunderts* (Leipzig, 1797) and *Die Vorzeit Lief-lands. Ein Denkmal des Pfaffen- und Rittergeistes* (Berlin, 1798) provided the most influential treatment of ancient natives and the Baltic Middle Ages. Hupel discussed it in the first volume of *Topographische Nachrichten von Lief- und Ehl-land* (Riga, 1774). Jannau used historical interpretation for developing political and social arguments in his *Geschichte der Sklaverey und Charakter der Bauern in Lief- und Ehl-land* (Riga, 1786).

¹⁵ Cf. Hayden White, 'The Noble Savage Theme as Fetish', in his *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism* (Baltimore and London, 1985), pp. 183–96 (here 191). In the Estonian context, this shift in meaning has also been pointed out by Jaan Undusk, 'Kolm võimalust kirjutada eestlaste ajalugu. Merkel – Jakobson – Hurt', *Keel ja Kirjandus* 11–12 (1997), 721–34 and 797–811 (here 728–9).

¹⁶ He especially relied on descriptions of the Old Prussians by other medieval chroniclers. Merkel adapted the description of the Old Prussians from 'The Deeds of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen' (around 1070) by Adam of Bremen, and from the works of several later historians who, in turn, have used *Chronicon terrae Prussiae* (around 1320s) of Peter of Dusburg.

¹⁷ HCL XXIV.5, p. 175, XXX.4, p. 218, XXX.5 (twice), pp. 220, 221, XXX.6, p. 222.

1710).¹⁸ This tradition preserved well into the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries: it was used by Johann Daniel Gruber (1686–1748) for the first edition of Henry's chronicle, by Johann Gottfried Arndt (1713–67) for its first German translation, and also by Merkel and Hupel.¹⁹ Later it also gained a spatial dimension: in 1836, Georg Magnus Knüpffer (1785–1863), the minister of Väike-Maarja, localized the Ebavere hill as the starting point of *Tharapita's* flight to Ösel, basing the argument on his reading of Henry.²⁰ Even today, the Ebavere legend remains widely appropriated in local heritage tourism.

Merkel's representations of the ancient socio-political world were shaped on the model of the Greek *polis*, another contemporary ideal. In presenting the political system of the ancient Estonians as republican, he presents Henry's ambiguous reference to a meeting in Raikküla as a proto-parliament where the nation gathered once a year for discussing common matters.²¹ Later, the interpretation became essential for the national tradition. Merkel also interpreted Henry as putting forward an idea that would later become one of the favourite motifs of Estonian national history writing: the extraordinary bravery and die-hard resistance of the ancient Estonians during the crusades.²² For instance,

¹⁸ Hiärn, *Ehst-, Lyf- und Lettlandische Geschichte*, p. 31. Christian Kelch, *Liefländische Historia* (Reval, 1695), p. 26. One should also point to the impact of Johann Wolfgang Boecler's *Der Einfältigen Ehsten Abergläubische Gebräuche, Weisen und Gewohnheiten* (Reval, 1685) on the spread of the Thor interpretations, especially in the nineteenth century; see Aivar Pöldvee, "Lihtsate eestlaste ebausukombed" ja Johann Wolfgang Boecleri tagasitulek. Lisandusi kiriku, kirjanduse ja kommete ajaloole, in *Ajalookirjutaja aeg*, ed. Piret Lotman (Tallinn, 2008), pp. 141–227.

¹⁹ *Origines Livoniae sacrae et civilis, seu chronicon Livonicum vetus* ..., ed. Johann Daniel Gruber (Frankfurt and Leipzig, 1740), p. 149; *Der Liefländischen Chronik Erster Theil von Liefeland unter seinen ersten Bischöfen* ..., trans. Johann Gottfried Arndt (Halle, 1747), p. 166. For the *Tharapita* interpretations, see Ants Viies, 'Taara avita!', in his *Kultuur ja traditsioon* (Tartu, 2001), pp. 48–68, and also Urmas Sutrop, 'Taaraapita – The Great God of the Oeselians', *Folklore* 26 (2004), 27–64.

²⁰ 'There was there a mountain and a most lovely forest in which, the natives say, the great god of the Oeselians, called Tharapita, was born, and from which he flew to Oesel.' HCL XXIV.5, p. 175; Brundage, pp. 193–4. See Georg Magnus Knüpffer, 'Der Berg des Thorapilla: Ein historischer Besuch', *Das Inland* 22 (1836).

²¹ Describing 'the first raid to Harrien' (1216), Henry mentions that: '... they entered the province of Harrien which is in the midst of Esthonia. There every year all the people round about were accustomed to assemble at Raela to make decisions.' HCL XX.2, p. 135; Brundage, p. 156. See Merkel, *Die Vorzeit Lieflands*, pp. 248–9. Merkel similarly argued that ancient Latvians had developed political society to a level similar to that of the Greek republics.

²² The transfer of this motif from Merkel to national history writing has also been pointed out in Ea Jansen, 'Friedrich Ludwig von Maydells "Fünzig Bilder aus der Geschichte

Henry often emphasizes the pride and stubbornness of the pagan Estonians, using expressions such as they 'still held up their heads and would obey neither the Germans nor the other nations'.²³ This and several similar passages have been (and still are) of great significance for the construction of the Estonian national identity and have often been appropriated in the glorification of the national character. In the original context, however, stubbornness was seen as a negative feature, demonstrating an opposition to the true faith and the right order of the world, and bearing allusions to the revolting tribes of the Old Testament.²⁴

Interpreting the crusades as a struggle between the church and republicanism, or tyranny and liberty, Merkel also made way for the popular later concept of the crusades as a native 'fight for freedom'.²⁵ This leads us to the criticism of the medieval Catholic church and crusading, which, together with the view of the Middle Ages as a dark period, relied on key authors such as Voltaire (1694–1778), David Hume (1711–76), Denis Diderot (1713–84) and Edward Gibbon (1737–94). In the Baltic context, it also drew upon Johann Gottlieb Herder (1744–1803).²⁶ Similarly to positive representations of the natives, this negative strategy later gained importance for Latvian and Estonian nationalism. Thus, for these young communities Enlightenment authors provided guidelines for imagining both 'us' and 'them': the indispensable antipode of the noble savages are the 'sword missionaries' who used religion to justify the cruel conquest of the crusades. In addition, stressing that medieval missionaries were sowing the

der deutschen Ostseeprovinzen Russlands"', in *Vier deutschbaltische Künstler: Carl Siegmund Walthers, Friedrich Ludwig von Maydell, August Georg Wilhelm Pezold, Gustav Adolf Hippus*, ed. Anne Lõugas (Tallinn, 1994), pp. 29–38 (here 31).

²³ HCL XVI.8, p. 112; Brundage, p. 132; cf. Job 15:26.

²⁴ Linda Kaljundi, *Waiting for the Barbarians: The Imagery, Dynamics and Functions of the Other in Northern German Missionary Chronicles, 11th–Early 13th Centuries. The Gestae Hamaburgensis Ecclesiae Pontificum of Adam of Bremen, Chronica Slavorum of Helmold of Bosau, Chronica Slavorum of Arnold of Lübeck, and Chronicon Livoniae of Henry of Livonia* (unpublished MA dissertation, Tartu University, 2005), pp. 183–6.

²⁵ See Anti Selart, 'Muistne vabadusvõitlus', *Vikerkaar* 10–11 (2003), 108–20 (here 110).

²⁶ Herder specifically addressed the Livonian crusades, blaming the Teutonic Order for wars and serfdom. See Johann G. Herder, *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* (Frankfurt am Main, 1989), p. 689. However, the authors of the Baltic Enlightenment also presented views that were less critical of the church. Hupel's version of the Livonian crusades (that also relies on Henry) is one such restrained and less emotional account. According to him, serfdom was not an immediate consequence of the crusades, but rather developed over a longer period. See Indrek Jürjo, *Aufklärung im Baltikum. Leben und Werk des livländischen Gelehrten August Wilhelm Hupel (1737–1819)* (Cologne, 2006).

papal faith also enabled the modern Lutheran church to distance itself from the burden of violent Christianization.

Descriptions of the Baltic *bons sauvages* were also influenced by New Worlds' wild men discourse. This supported the anti-slavery rhetoric, as many authors claimed that medieval conquerors had subjugated the Baltic indigenous population to a level similar to that of peoples in the African and American colonies. Such comparisons contributed to the legend of the 'discovery of the Baltic' by German merchants from Bremen who spontaneously arrived by ship in the twelfth century, mirroring the later Columbian finding of America. Merkel also used this motif, first appropriated by the early modern Livonian chroniclers: Johann Renner (1525–83), Balthasar Russow (1536–1600) and Franz Nyenstede (1540–1622). The legend was based on an interpolation of Henry's chronicle that Paul Johansen has dated to the years 1548–78.²⁷ In the Hannover manuscript (the basis of Gruber's edition) and several others, there stood a sentence in the final chapter referring to the year 1226 and stating that 'Many and glorious things happened in Livonia at the time when the heathen were converted to the faith of Jesus Christ during the past 67 years when the Bremen merchants first discovered the Livonian port ...'²⁸ Depending on the method of calculation, the 'discovery' was made either in the year 1159 or 1158.

To make a small excursion, it was only the discovery of the Zamoyski manuscript in 1862 that showed the story was groundless. However, the colonizing legend became a popular theme in nineteenth-century Baltic-German Romanticism and, not surprisingly, in Bremen. Peter Janssen (1844–1908), a German historical painter, made a mural painting for the Bremen neo-gothic bourse hall (*Neue Börse* (1864), destroyed in World War II), titled 'The Colonization of the Baltic Coast' (1872) that depicted Bremen's citizens as the founders of Riga. Janssen, in turn, relied on the Baltic-German artist Ludwig von Maydell (1795–1846) (see below). His engraving 'The First Landing of the Bremen Merchants on the Daugava' shows European merchants offering mirrors, colourful cloths and other small trade to the indigenous people, similar to the discourse on encounters with peoples of the New World (see Figure 17.1). The reuse of the discovery motif is a good example of how the ideological meaning can change in different contexts. While in Enlightenment circles it was used

²⁷ Paul Johansen, 'Die Legende von der Aufsegelung Livlands durch Bremer Kaufleute', in *Europa und Übersee: Festschrift für Egmont Zechlin*, ed. Otto Brunner and Dietrich Gerhard (Hamburg, 1961), pp. 42–68.

²⁸ 'Multa quidem et gloriosa contigerunt in Livonia tempore conversionis gentium ad fidem Iesu Christi per annos LXVII. praeteritos, ex quibus primo inventus est a mercatoribus *Bremensibus* portus *Livonicus* ...', *Origines Livoniae sacrae et civilis*, ed. Johann Daniel Gruber, p. 177.



Figure 17.1 Ludwig von Maydell, 'Erste Landung der Bremer Kaufleute in der Düna. 1156' ('The First Landing of the Bremen Merchants on the Daugava. 1156'), in *Fünfzig Bilder aus der Geschichte der deutschen Ostsee-Provinzen Russlands*, vol. 1 (Tartu, 1839). Copperplate engraving © Art Museum of Estonia

for criticizing colonization, in late nineteenth-century writing it was integrated into the legitimization narrative of the Baltic colonies. However, as previously indicated, the Baltic Enlightenment had its strongest impact on Estonian and Latvian nationalisms. To briefly summarize, Enlightenment heritages taught the young nationalists not just to conceptualize history, but also to understand it as a tool for social criticism and rivalry. Equally influential to national movements was the positive conceptualization of folk culture, which in the Baltics was also inspired by Herder. Next to establishing many canonical features of the ancient past and indigenous culture, the Enlightenment tradition also shaped the future appropriation of Henry's repertoire of events, characters, themes and motifs.

The Nineteenth-Century Nationalist Utopias

Henry's chronicle came into the limelight of historical debate in the era of romantic historicism and nationalism. As argued by Ann Rigney, this period picked up the Enlightenment interest in culture and antiquarianism and fed it into emergent nationalism with its interest in identity politics and folk culture.²⁹ One can speak of the encounter and conflict of at least two different traditions of re-using Henry: the Baltic-German and the Estonian/Latvian. This subchapter mainly focuses on the uses of Henry by the latter, discussing the chronicle's role in the narrative of the young Latvian and, especially, Estonian nations, as well as its appropriation in the various mediums of cultural memory.

One cannot examine the young nationalist histories, however, without the context of German Romanticism. The Romantic yearning for the past became attractive for the Baltic-Germans as a part of the *Kulturnationalismus* and later as part of the counter-reaction to Russification in the late nineteenth century (the nationalist politics of Imperial Russia that promoted assigning Russians to administrative positions, the use of the Russian language and the Orthodox church). In the Baltic provinces, the arrival of German Romanticism meant abandoning the Enlightenment critique of the past and the restoration of the Middle Ages' glory.³⁰ Indeed, in the nineteenth century, German history *was*

²⁹ Ann Rigney, *Imperfect Histories: The Elusive Past and the Legacy of Romantic Historicism* (Ithaca and London, 2001), p. 8.

³⁰ See also Heinrich Bosse, 'Geschichtschreibung des baltischen Biedermeier', in *Geschichte der deutschbaltischen Geschichtschreibung*, ed. Georg von Rauch (Cologne and Vienna, 1986), pp. 103–19; and Wilhelm Lenz, "Alt-Livland" in der deutschbaltischen Geschichtschreibung, 1870–1918', in *ibid.*, pp. 203–32. For the uses of history against Russification, see Irene Neander, 'Carl Schirren als Historiker', in *ibid.*, pp. 175–202.

medieval history; the latter almost becoming the metonym for the nation.³¹ The Middle Ages thus absorbed most of the energies of German historians. The period saw not only the professionalization of history, but also the establishing of the national canon of sources for identifying a specifically German past. In the Baltics, Romantic nationalism and professionalization went hand in hand, as fascination with the Middle Ages produced a wave of source publications. In this new canon, Henry's chronicle gained a prominent place for the first time in its history, though it remained 'relatively young in a historiographical sense', as Tiina Kala puts it.³² However, now Henry's chronicle had found its way to various series of source editions that aimed to mark the historical identity of the Baltic-Germans. The first nineteenth-century edition of Henry's chronicle (with a facing German translation) was published in the series *Scriptores rerum Livonicarum*.³³ Yet, in the age of *Quellenforschung*, the study of Henry's chronicle had its heyday when the *Codex Zamoscianus* was found in 1862. This discovery seemingly fulfilled the dream to reconstruct a text that was as close as possible to the lost original. After one more edition and German translation in 1874, the new reconstruction of the chronicle was published in the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* series and accepted into the canon of the German past.³⁴

The Baltic-German community also sought other ways of establishing continuity with the medieval past. Besides scholarly institutions, publications and source editions, it also included the restoration of medieval ruins and the spread of historicist architecture. These activities showed a desire to construct a common, durable and specific German past. Perhaps not surprisingly, 'built' medievalism is lacking in the tradition of the new nations, who contrasted themselves with medieval heritage and did not possess the resources for monumentalizing their version of the past.³⁵ Furthermore, their appropriations of the medieval period have never much used any visual arts: as the Estonian historian Ea Jansen has put it, the national historiography prefers to paint

³¹ Peter Fritzsche, 'The Archive', *History and Memory* 17 (2005), 15–44 (here 19–20).

³² See Chapter 16 by Tiina Kala in this volume.

³³ *Origines Livoniae sacrae et civilis: Heinrich's des Letten älteste Chronik von Livland*, ed. and trans. August Heinrich Hansen, in *Scriptores rerum Livonicarum*, vol. I) (Riga and Leipzig, 1853).

³⁴ *Heinrici Chronicon Lyvoniae*, ed. Wilhelm Arndt (MGH rer. Germ. 23) (Hanover and Leipzig, 1874), pp. 231–332. Before that, in 1865 Carl Schirren had published *Der Codex Zamoscianus, enthaltend Capitel I–XXIII, 8 der Origines Livoniae* (Dorpat, 1865). Schirren's work was used for a German translation, *Heinrich's von Lettland Livländische Chronik*, trans. Eduard Pabst (Reval, 1867). For a detailed overview of the editing history, see Chapter 16 by Tiina Kala in this volume.

³⁵ See Linda Kaljundi, 'Muinasmaa süüd', *Vikerkaar* 8–9 (2008), 98–112.

its pictures with words.³⁶ The Baltic *Biedermeier*, however, included visual appropriations of the crusading past. The best-known illustrations of Henry's chronicle were made by Friedrich Ludwig von Maydell for his series of engravings 'Fifty Pictures from the German Baltic Provinces of Russia' (1839, 1842), which were influenced by German Romantic and *Biedermeier* artists.³⁷ Maydell's work illuminates the abandonment of Enlightenment critique of the Middle Ages and the rise of a Romantic cult of forefathers that lauds the crusaders' heroic spirit and devotion to higher ideals. Moreover, it also provides an interesting example of a new cultural translation of Henry's chronicle.

At a first viewing, the engravings seem to represent one of the most contradictory readings of Henry. The lyric and decorative images depict graceful and beautiful figures with a bourgeois cosiness, yet, at the same time praise the sword mission with violent *mise-en-scène*. The seeming contradiction can be explained from the *Kulturträger* perspective that presumed native barbarism. The artist had adopted the common belief that culture is not only righted but also obliged to fight barbarianism. According to Maydell the pillar of culture was the Christian religion and church. Thus, his binary interpretation and justification of the Livonian crusades came very close to Henry's version.³⁸ His engravings therefore oppose cruel and unwise heathens and laud pious and brave Christian knights and martyrs, thematize the conflict between culture and barbarianism, promote Christianity over paganism and serve to legitimize colonialism. Good examples of this approach are the images 'Theodoric in Danger of Becoming Sacrificed to Gods in 1192' and 'The Missionaries Hacking the Sacred Groves of the Estonians in 1220', which draw on scenes from Henry.³⁹ As most of Maydell's visualizations of the past are based on Henry's chronicle (to a lesser extent, he also used the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* and Thomas Hiärn's chronicle), the

³⁶ Jansen, 'Friedrich Ludwig von Maydells "Fünfzig Bilder ..."', pp. 32–3.

³⁷ Friderich Ludwig von Maydell, *Fünfzig Bilder aus der Geschichte der deutschen Ostsee-Provinzen Russlands*, vol. I (Tartu, 1839), vol. II (Tartu, 1842). Maydell was especially influenced by the popular Adrian Ludwig Richter (1803–83), 'a painter of the German people', and Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeldt (1794–1872), a member of the Nazarene movement who had illustrated the *Nibelungenlied* and the Bible. Konrad Maier has even compared Maydell's series to Ludwig Richter's illustrations for Eduard Duller's *Die Geschichte des deutschen Volkes* (Leipzig, 1840): see Konrad Maier, 'Rahvuskultuur eesti kunstis? 19. sajandi keskpaigast I maailmasõjani', in *Rahvuskultuur ja tema teised*, ed. Rein Undusk (Tallinn, 2008), pp. 151–73 (here 154).

³⁸ As argued in Jansen, 'Friedrich Ludwig von Maydells "Fünfzig Bilder ..."', pp. 33–8.

³⁹ 'Der Mönch Theodorich in Gefahr den Goetzen geopfert zu werden. A° 1192', 1839; 'Missionäre hauen die Götzenbäume der Ehsten um A° 1220', 1842. See respectively HCL I.10, pp. 4–5, and HCL XXIV.5, p. 175. All Maydell's images referred to here are copperplate engravings.



Figure 17.2 Ludwig von Maydell, 'Wie der Sturm der Ehsten auf die lettische Burg Beverin abgeschlagen wird. Ad 1207' ('How the Storming of the Estonians Was Beaten Back at the Latvian Hillfort of Beverina. AD 1207'), in *Fünzig Bilder aus der Geschichte der deutschen Ostsee-Provinzen Russlands*, vol. 1 (Tartu, 1839). Copperplate engraving © Art Museum of Estonia

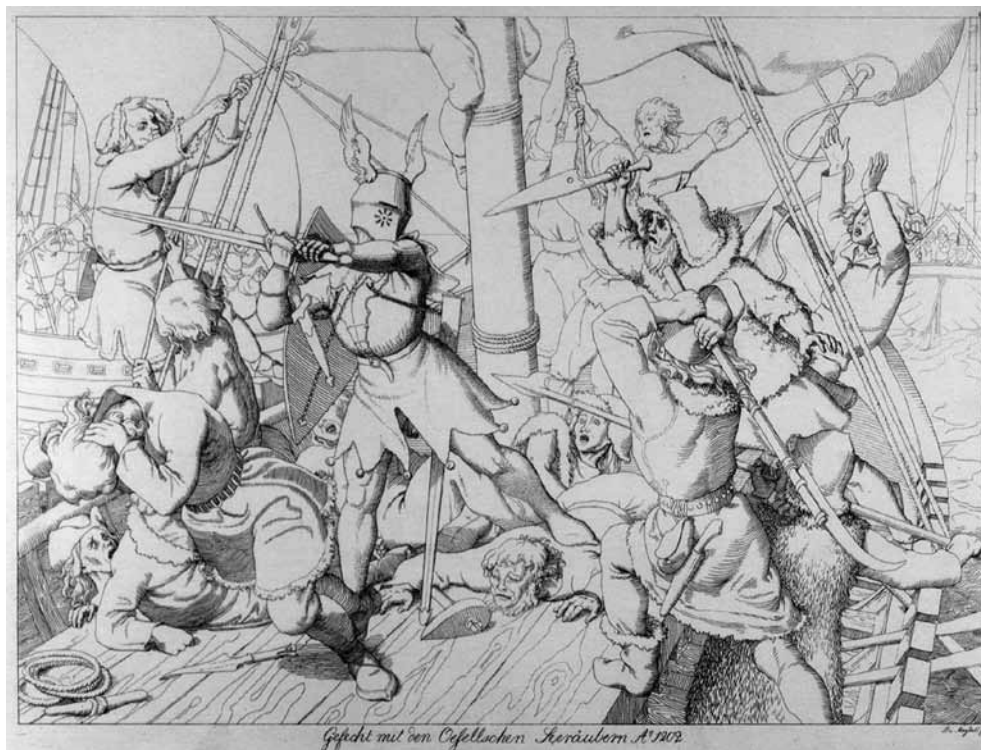


Figure 17.3 Ludwig von Maydell, 'Gefecht mit den Oesellischen Seeräubern. Ad 1202' ('A Fight with the Öselian Pirates. AD 1202'), in *Fünzig Bilder aus der Geschichte der deutschen Ostsee-Provinzen Russlands*, vol. 1 (Tartu, 1839).
Copperplate engraving © Art Museum of Estonia

series sheds light on what the Romantics considered to be the most spectacular moments of Henry's narrative. Indeed, the advertisement annotation of the image series states that the artist had much trouble in choosing the scenes that would be both historically significant and picturesque.⁴⁰ Most of the engravings depict the founding moments of the colony and the course of conquest. Maydell has chosen either significant or dramatic and dynamic events from the chronicle, such as the siege of Beverin that also depicts the chronicler himself 'singing prayers to God on a musical instrument' (1208) (see Figure 17.2), a battle with the Öselian pirates who return from a raid to Blekinge (1203) (see Figure 17.3), or the siege of Dorpat (1224).⁴¹ Next to these, Maydell also presents some of the more peaceful moments from colonial history: the 'discovery of Livonia' by the Bremen merchants (see Figure 17.1), Bishop Albert laying the first stone of Riga (1201), Theodoric presenting Caupo to Innocent III (1203), or the liturgical performance in Riga (1204).⁴² Maydell also favoured baptism scenes that helped to stress the German role in transmitting culture. In the spirit of the forefathers' cult, the artist praised the great crusading heroes and especially Bishop Albert. He also sympathized with Caupo, the Livish chieftain who allied with the German crusaders and was presented by Henry as a model of a faithful convert (also discussed below).

In an indication that the reading of Henry at those times was not clearly polarized, Maydell's illustrations of the chronicle were also used for Estonian-language popular histories. For example, a peasants' calendar (1861–62) published four of Maydell's engravings that depicted chronicle scenes and showed the colonizer (and not the colonized) in a favourable light.⁴³ Moreover, during the Baltic *Biedermeier* the Enlightenment view on indigenous culture did not entirely disappear. Romanticism and Herderianism produced not only an idealization of the German forefathers, but also a curiosity towards the ancient past and folk culture of the natives, which became the object of study for

⁴⁰ Jansen, 'Friedrich Ludwig von Maydells "Fünfzig Bilder ..."', p. 30.

⁴¹ 'Wie der Sturm der Ehsten auf die lettische Burg Beverin abgeschlagen wird. Ad 1207' (sic) (1839); 'Gefecht mit den Oesellschen Seeräubern. Ad 1202' (sic) (1839); 'Belagerung und Erstürmung Dorpats A° 1223' (1842). For the siege of Beverin, see HCL XII.6, pp. 63–4; Brundage, pp. 84–6 (here 85). For the naval battle with the Öselians, see HCL VII.2, pp. 19–20. For the siege of Dorpat, see HCL XXVIII.5–6, pp. 202–5. Next to German victories, Maydell also depicted the victory of the Danes in Reval in 1219.

⁴² For the founding of Riga, see HCL V.1, p. 15; for Caupo's visit to the pope, see HCL VII.3, pp. 20–21; and for the liturgical *ludus magnus*, see HCL IX.14, p. 32.

⁴³ 'Kuidas rahvas meie Maal risti-ussuliseks sanud', in *Ma-rahwa kassuline Kalender* (Tartu, 1861–62).

Estophiles. Tellingly, next to his visualizations of the barbarianism of the natives' ancient culture, Maydell also illustrated Estonian folktales.⁴⁴

While Maydell's series was a significant attempt to use the positive conceptualization of the medieval past – and Henry's chronicle in particular – for creating a Baltic-German identity, the reception of his work was not too enthusiastic and the series remained unfinished.⁴⁵ Yet, due to a lack of visualizations of the crusades, Maydell's images are used to this date, often in ideologically opposite contexts: for example, in Estonian school history textbooks that proclaim a completely different view of the crusades to Maydell.⁴⁶

This alternative view of the crusades relates to the rise of young nations, a phenomenon by no means uncommon in the nineteenth century.⁴⁷ From the 1850s on, new nationalist movements in the Baltic region were backed not only by the general rise of nationalism in Europe, but also by the bettering of the legal and socio-economic situation of the local peasantry. Also capitalizing on increasing literacy rates, the spread of print-Estonian and Latvian, and the growth of a small but energetic intelligentsia supported nationalist sentiment. Similarly with such national revivals, the use of history played a crucial role in nation building. It was during this period that the core structure of Latvian and Estonian national historical writing was established. Even if the turning of Henry's pagan barbarians into noble savages and noble crusaders into brute barbarians had its roots in Enlightenment tradition, these ideas were adapted by, and for, a new kind of historical narrative.⁴⁸ As argued by Benedict Anderson, the Enlightenment clearly had a powerful impact, above all in providing an

⁴⁴ Maydell illustrated Estonian folktales by the well-known Estophile Friedrich Robert Faehlmann, such as 'The Song of Vanemuine' and 'Dawn and Twilight', and also belonged to the Learned Estonian Society (Ger. *Gelehrte Estnische Gesellschaft*). See also Jansen, 'Friedrich Ludwig von Maydells "Fünzig Bilder ..."', p. 33.

⁴⁵ Due to the small number of subscribers, Maydell managed to publish only 22 images instead of the 50 engravings he initially planned.

⁴⁶ See, for instance, Mait Kõiv and Priit Raudkivi, *Keskaeg. Ajalooõpik 7. klassile*, vol. 2 (Tallinn, 2004), pp. 106, 109.

⁴⁷ For a brief introduction, see Toivo U. Raun, 'Nineteenth and Early Twentieth-Century Estonian Nationalism Revisited', *Nations and Nationalism* 9 (2003), 129–47.

⁴⁸ For an overview of the Estonian historical consciousness, see Ants Viires, 'Eestlaste ajalooeadvus 18.–19. sajandil', *Tuna* 3 (2001), 20–36. The impact of Merkel's ideas on the making of Estonian national history is discussed in Undusk, 'Kolm võimalust kirjutada eestlaste ajalugu'. See also Undusk, "Wechsel und Wiederkehr" als Prinzipien des Weltgeschehens: Zu Merckels Geschichtsideologie', in *'Ich werde gewiß große Energie zeigen.' Garlieb Merkel (1769–1850) als Kämpfer, Kritiker und Projektmacher in Berlin und Riga*, ed. Jörg Drews (Bielefeld, 2000), pp. 133–47. Merkel's *Die Vorzeit Lieflands* was translated into Estonian slightly later, in 1909.

arsenal of ideological criticism of imperial and *ancien régimes*, but ‘it did not create in itself the kind, or shape, of imagined community for the objects of its admiration or disgust’.⁴⁹ In Latvia and Estonia, as elsewhere, local activists played the decisive role in accomplishing this task. In their narrative, the Middle Ages became just as central as in the Enlightenment and Baltic-German version of the past.⁵⁰

As the birth of Latvian and Estonian histories coincided with the rise of Henry’s chronicle, it was natural that this work would become the *Ur-text* for national narratives. One could even conclude that with the emergence of nationalism, Estonian and Latvian history writing has been producing cultural translations of the chronicle. The following section discusses how their narratives, archetypes for victories and losses, images for heroes, enemies and traitors, have developed a vivid, yet tense dialogue with Henry’s chronicle. In examining Henry’s role in the new traditions, however, one should consider a few significant aspects. The construction of national histories was born not of concord with this text, but rather out of conflict, discomfort and disagreement. For the young nations, Henry’s mentioning of the Latvians and Estonians enabled them to enter into the realm of written history. The crusading chronicle, however, also became a source for constructing a national tragedy narrative. Hence entering written history is closely associated with the loss of ancient paradise. One should also take into account that in the beginning, young nationalists possessed little funding and could not rely upon elite circles to invent and establish their traditions. Drawing on the model put forth by the Czech scholar, Miroslav Hroch, they remained in the position of ‘non-dominant ethnic groups’ and lacked the features of a fully formed nation: political autonomy, standardized language for expressing forms of high culture and an established class structure. As the tradition of a state was lacking, national revival was based to a great extent upon ethnographic heritage and folklore.⁵¹ Therefore national histories also had to rely on imaginary sphere, primarily using fictive, vocal and performed mediums.

⁴⁹ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p. 65.

⁵⁰ For an overview of the crusading narrative in the Estonian historiography, see Sulev Vahtre, *Muinasaja loojang Eestis. Vabadusvõitlus 1208–1227* (Tallinn, 1990), pp. 23–46; Selart, ‘Muistne vabadusvõitlus’; and in the Latvian historiography, see Kaspars Kļaviņš, ‘Die Interpretationen des Mittelalters in Lettland während des nationalen Erwachens der Letten’, *Baltica: Die Vierteljahresschrift für Baltische Kultur* 3 (2000), 10–21; Kaspars Kļaviņš, ‘Die Idee des Mittelalters als Beispiel des wechselnden Wertesystems in Lettland während des 20. Jahrhunderts’, *Baltica: Die Vierteljahresschrift für Baltische Kultur* 1 (2001), 17–26.

⁵¹ Miroslav Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of the Social Composition of Patriotic Groups Among the Smaller European Nations* (New York, 2000).

To the Estonian-speaking audience, history was first introduced in eighteenth-century calendars.⁵² The same century also introduced medieval history, as the preface to the first Estonian Bible translation (1739) gave an overview of the advent of the Christian faith to the Estonians. It emphasized the piety and peaceful aims of Bishop Meinhard, blamed his successors for the violent mission that distanced the people from Christian faith and, as one might expect from a Lutheran Bible, praised only the Reformation as having brought the light of faith to the people.⁵³ This continued the tradition already established by the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Lutheran chroniclers (Balthasar Russow and others). The first manifest construction of Estonian history, however, was the national epic *Kalevipoeg* ('Kalev's Son') (1853/62) by Friedrich Reinhold Kreutzwald (1803–82), a writer and a leading figure of the nationalist movement. It is a tale about the waning of a golden age that ends with the arrival of 'iron men' on Estonian shores and thus provides an allegory of crusade. Even more explicit references to the crusades can be found in the Latvian national epic poem *Lāčplēsis* ('Bear-slayer') (1888) by Andrejs Pumpurs (1841–1902), a poet and prominent figure in the Young Latvia movement. *Lāčplēsis* is a Romantic adventure tale comprised of fashionable ethnography and several elements from Henry's chronicle, such as even the figure of Henry himself (see below). Both epics longed for a 'golden age' and stressed the violence of conquest – and these features also remained central to the traditions of the national historical writing established in the mid nineteenth century.

It was Carl Robert Jakobson (1841–82), leader of a group of more radical nationalists, who formulated the core of the Estonian narrative.⁵⁴ In his so-called 'First Fatherland Speech' (1868), titled 'The Ages of Light, Darkness and Dawn of the Estonian People', Jakobson established the traditional structure of Estonian history. He divided it into three periods: the light of ancient freedom, the darkness of slavery and the present age of dawn, following the trope according to which, in Europe, the new nationalisms began to imagine themselves as

⁵² See Endel Annus, *Eesti kalendrikirjandus 1720–1900* (Tallinn, 2000).

⁵³ The author of the preface was likely Anton Thor Helle (1683–1748), a translator of the Bible, clergyman and linguist. As the same preface was used in all the prints of the Estonian-language Bible until the early twentieth century (altogether tens of thousands of copies), its impact on the popular historical consciousness can hardly be overestimated. See Viires, 'Eestlaste ajaloo teadvus', p. 24.

⁵⁴ Carl Robert Jakobson, *Kolm isamaa kõnet*, ed. Rudolf Pöldmäe (Tallinn, 1991). Of great importance in the representation of the crusades was the first volume of his school textbook *Kooli lugemise raamat* (Tartu, 1867) that enjoyed 15 editions during its publication run.

'awakening from sleep'.⁵⁵ For Estonian-language history, Jakobson's militant tone marked a significant change, especially when compared to the earlier Lutheran calendar histories that called on their readers for piety and obedience. Even though Jakobson's narrative derives from the Enlightenment, now the *sauvages* were the subject and not the object of inquiry. Nationalist historians identified with Henry's 'ferocious heathens' and aimed to write the historical narrative from the perspective of these fierce men.

Establishing the young nations as historical agents was closely bound to affirming that the Estonians and Latvians (who at that time held a low social status in the Baltic provinces of the Russian empire) were ancient *Kulturnationen*. Showing that he had learned his Merkel, Jakobson argued that '[the ancient times] show us the Estonian people in a spirit so high, as we see it only amongst the most highly educated ancient peoples'.⁵⁶ In the process of elevating the Estonian past with that of the ancients, Henry gained a central place. Indeed, Jakobson's speech was subtitled 'Notes from the Old Books of Time' and the author eagerly refers to the chronicle of 'Henry the Latvian'. So, in creating the image of ancient Estonians, Jakobson undertook what we might call a nationalist translation of Henry's chronicle and established the central traits of a future Estonian re-reading of this text. As in the Enlightenment interpretation, Henry's positive signs were turned into negative, and vice versa: the light of the true faith became the night of slavery, and the darkness of heathenism the golden light of the ancient paradise, the pious crusaders the cruel conquerors, and the savage barbarians the noble heroes. Still, some elements of the chronicle were adopted almost in their entirety. These include the bellicosity of the ancient Estonians. Relying on Henry's image of the warlike pagans, Jakobson emphasized the military and masculine values of his people. Yet, he also stressed orderliness, which is something not associated with the pagans in medieval texts: the organization of space (Jakobson gives lengthy descriptions of the ancient system of hillforts), as well as a social and spiritual order (by pointing, for example, to a rather clear-cut pantheon of gods). Jakobson reveals his aims in the summation of his re-interpretation of the chronicle: 'that much we can at least learn from [Henry's] letters that the Estonian people had their own priests

⁵⁵ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p. 195.

⁵⁶ Jakobson, *Kolm isamaa kõnet*, p. 17. Other nationalists also used comparison to the Greeks, commonplace during the Enlightenment. For instance, Jakob Hurt argued that: 'In their heroic spirit and love for one's fatherland the ancient Estonians do not lack behind the ancient Greeks and Romans.' Jakob Hurt, *Pildid isamaa süüdinud asjust* (Tartu, 1879), p. 71. Hurt was a pastor and a leader of the moderate nationalists. His *Pildid isamaa süüdinud asjust* was another popular and influential history book, presenting, however, a slightly more balanced critical assessment of the crusades.

and temples, and that they had their own kings or elders ruling over them, who lived in secure strongholds.⁵⁷

Jakobson and nationalist writing in general also referenced Henry's meagre representations of Estonian paganism as a worship of sacred groves, mixing them with Romantic constructions such as the mythologies by Friedrich Robert Faehlmann (1798–1850), an influential Estophile and folklore enthusiast. While these ideas hearken to Enlightenment enthusiasm towards ancient religion, they differ considerably from the calendar histories that judged paganism negatively. As in earlier times, in the nationalist imagery Henry's mention of *Tharapita* played a key role in constructing the ancient pantheon, remaining one of the chronicle's main contributions to Estonian historical Romanticism. In the period when these mythologies proliferated, Faehlmann's *Estonian Folktales* (1840), Kreutzwald's national epic *Kalevipoeg*, as well as his other folk poems, all served to contribute towards the Estonian image of *Taara* as it came to be comprised in national Romantic historicism (and is still known today).⁵⁸ There were also attempts to establish a link between the chronicle and oral heritage, though it is now known that the few *Taara* poems which folklore collectors reported at the time were fabrications.⁵⁹

Equally important for national history were the images of antagonists: the crusaders, Catholic clerics and, especially, the Sword Brethren.⁶⁰ The narrative of 'our paradise', as Jakobson calls it,⁶¹ was constructed hand-in-hand with that of the bloody crusades and sword mission. These were likewise profoundly influenced by Merkel's and other kindred authors' conceptualization of the Middle Ages as a 'dark age'. As excerpts from Henry's chronicle were often used to confirm the cruelty of conquest, one could also speak about a certain transfer of violence from the medieval contexts to modernity. Similarly to the majority of crusading chronicles, Henry's text represents an environment of abundant violence that has been used to create analogies with biblical histories. In the nineteenth century, however, these depictions gained a wholly different meaning due to

⁵⁷ Jakobson, *Kolm isamaa kõnet*, p. 19.

⁵⁸ Still interpreting *Tharapita* as a war cry, Faehlmann and Kreutzwald established *Taara* as the name of the god. Nevertheless, this version was chosen from among several alternatives, such as *Thor* (the above-discussed link to the Scandinavian pantheon remained prominent), *Toor(o)*, or *Taar*. For the genesis of *Taara* in the writings of Estophiles, see Viires, 'Taara avita!', pp. 52–6.

⁵⁹ Viires, 'Taara avita!', p. 54.

⁶⁰ Cf. Juhan Kreem, 'The Teutonic Order in Livonia: Diverging Historiographical Traditions', in *The Crusades and the Military Orders: Expanding the Frontiers of Medieval Latin Christianity*, ed. Zsolt Hunyadi and József Laszlovszky (Budapest, 2001), pp. 467–80.

⁶¹ Jakobson, *Kolm isamaa kõnet*, p. 10.

different sensibilities, representational needs and contexts. Jakobson's speech illustrates the uses of medieval violence towards modern aims: during Bishop Albert's reign 'there almost did not pass a year when people's blood would not have bled like creeks of water'.⁶² Another strategy of the national history was the claim of the hypocrisy of the mission, a trend already seen in both Reformation and Enlightenment critique. Again Henry's chronicle was useful in establishing this connection, especially in his account of the Rigan and Danish rivalry in northern Estonia during the 1220s.⁶³ In national cultural memory, Henry's rather problematic representation of this ritual rivalry has been taken on face value and become known as 'the baptism competition'. The negative views of the medieval church can be explained in that several leading national activists had been trained as Lutheran pastors. They were well versed in the Lutheran and Enlightenment critique of the Middle Ages and applied this knowledge to mitigate the fact that the ancient Estonian pagans whom they identified as their forefathers had actually fought against Christianity. The seeming contradiction was overcome by stressing that these figures had revolted against the papal faith, a doctrine considered even more harmful than original paganism.⁶⁴

As the national discourse had therefore arrived at the opposite of what Henry had been striving for, this explains its tense relationship with the chronicle. The founders of Estonian and Latvian national histories who established the relationship between the old texts and the young nations also developed an opposition towards 'other' and 'our' sources. Not only were historical agents divided between 'us' and the 'other', but also documents written in 'alien' languages (Latin, Low-German, and so on) were considered as manifestations of an 'alien' spirit. With the existence of only 'alien' texts telling 'us' about 'our' ancient history, this vacuum helped to inspire the creation of an archive of 'our own' sources: the collection of folklore and archaeological heritage that spread rapidly in the late nineteenth century. Jakob Hurt (1839–1907), the propagator of this movement, tellingly proclaimed that the Baltic chronicles revealed only

⁶² Jakobson, *Kolm isamaa kõnet*, p. 24.

⁶³ HCL XXIV.2; Brundage, p. 189; HCL XXIV.5; Brundage, p. 193. After the Danes had established themselves in northern Estonia (1219) and many of the Estonians accepted Christianity from them, rivalry over the ecclesiastical rule of the region grew serious. Henry takes part in this quarrel, presenting the Danes as having performed their mission in an unorthodox manner. It is a good example of the value of (arguably) unorthodox rituals. See Linda Kaljundi, '(Re)Performing the Past: Crusading, History Writing and Rituals in the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia', in *The Performance of Christian and Pagan Storyworlds: Uncanonical Chapters of the History of Nordic Medieval Literature*, ed. Tuomas M.S. Lehtonen and Lars Boje Mortensen (Turnhout, forthcoming).

⁶⁴ A good example of this approach is Hurt, *Pildid isamaa sündinud asjust*.

the outer history of the Estonian people, while the inner history still needed to be discovered from the 'living source' of folklore. To support this argument, he published several collections of folk poems under the title *Monumenta Estoniae antiquae*.⁶⁵ Similar ideas supported the revival of popular culture in Latvia, notably the collection of folk songs by Krišjānis Barons (1835–1923), a writer, folklorist and leading national activist.⁶⁶

Though this environment had opened up alternatives for the constructions of ancient past, it served to delegitimize 'alien' documents (such as Henry's chronicle). This is reflected in the lamentations about the lack and, at the same time, unreliability of written sources about the ancient period. Carl Robert Jakobson states that: '[t]hese times stand too far from us so that we could get a full picture of Estonian people's laws and customs at that time. ... Of men of our people only Henry the Latvian tells us, who was yet brought up in Germany and looked at many things through different glasses than we would have liked.'⁶⁷ Hence, next to the joy over finding a historical narrative of ancient times and the eagerness to learn more about 'our' past, there also looms a hesitant and distrustful attitude towards the chronicle and its author.

Nevertheless, disagreement with Henry's version of the past did not mean neglecting the chronicle. Rather, the rise of the Estonian, as well as Latvian, national histories brought along a boom in the chronicle's appropriations. This included the translation of the text into Estonian and Latvian when the young nations adopted source publications as a medium of cultural memory – even though they did it at a less demanding scholarly level. The Estonian translation was made by a leading figure in the national heritage movement and popular history, Jaan Jung (1835–1900) and published in 1881–84.⁶⁸ The first Latvian translation appeared in 1883 and was made by the historian and ethnographer Matīss Siliņš (1861–1942),⁶⁹ suggesting the chronicle's growing relevance.

⁶⁵ Cf. Undusk, 'Kolm võimalust kirjutada eestlaste ajalugu', pp. 807–10. For Jakob Hurt's collections of folklore, see *Vana kannel*, vols 1–2 (Tartu, 1875–86) and *Setukeste laulud* (Helsinki, 1904–07).

⁶⁶ Krišjānis Barons's opus magnum is the six-volume collection of Latvian folklore *Latvju dainas* (vol. 1, Jelgava, 1894, vols 2–6, St Petersburg, 1903–15) that contains 217,996 songs.

⁶⁷ Jakobson, *Kolm isamaa kõnet*, p. 19.

⁶⁸ *Läti Hendriku Liiwi maa kroonika ehk Aja raamat*, 4 vols, trans. Jaan Jung (Tartu, 1881–83). Tellingly, in the preface Jung admits: 'I have had more trouble in writing this book than one could judge from its appearance.' Jaan Jung, 'Eessõna', in *Läti Hendriku Liiwi maa kroonika*, vol. 1, p. 5. Initially, he had translated the chronicle from the German version, but due to pressure from the publisher, he had to undertake a new translation from Latin – even though his meagre knowledge of Latin likely necessitated a great reliance on the German.

⁶⁹ *Latviešu Indriķa kronika*, trans. Matīss Siliņš (Riga, 1883).

'Let this small book go and proclaim with its feeble words to the beloved Estonian people their oldest known history,' Jung proclaims with considerable enthusiasm in the preface.⁷⁰ The chronicle's wide-scale acceptance, however, did not proceed as easily as Jung had wished. In fact, the task of translating Henry for the Estonian and Latvian audiences continued to include more than merely linguistic problems.

By the late nineteenth century, historical *belles-lettres* had become the key medium for presenting history to the wider audience. In the case of young nations, the particular attraction of the Walter Scott style of historical fiction seems to lie not only in the coherent account of events and the possibility for identification, but also in 'a promise of another historical narrative'.⁷¹ Moreover, these novels could be examined as kinds of 'imperfect histories', a term Ann Rigney has coined, relying on Foucauldian scarcity principle. Here historical fiction may play a role as (an imperfect) history for those who, by choice or necessity, do not have access to alternative accounts.⁷² In the Estonian case, the landmark stories of Eduard Bornhöhe (1862–1923) dealt not with the crusades, but with the so-called St George's Night Uprising (1343–45) and drew on later chroniclers, such as Balthasar Russow and Christian Kelch. The uprising gained meaning and symbolic significance only as the continuation of the struggle against the German conquerors that had been lost during the crusades.⁷³ Amongst the authors who sought to follow Bornhöhe's lead, Andres Saal (1861–1931) contributed greatly to the narrative and imagery of the crusading period.⁷⁴ For verifying the adventures of his fictional heroes, Saal re-evoked many of scenes, characters and *topoi* from Henry's chronicle and so paved their way into the story-world of Estonian historical fiction. Saal's novels also remarkably popularized the image of the *Taara* religion. Departing from

⁷⁰ Jung, 'Eessõna', p. 6.

⁷¹ Rigney, *Imperfect Histories*, p. 53.

⁷² Rigney, *Imperfect Histories*, pp. 54–5.

⁷³ Eduard Bornhöhe, *Tasuja* ('The Avenger') (1880) and *Villu võitlused* ('The Battles of Villu') (1890). In the later cultural memory, Bornhöhe's fictive protagonist, 'The Avenger' (Est. *Tasuja*, or *Jaanus*) has sometimes been portrayed as seizing the mantle of national hero from Henry's chronicle's *Lembitu*. The novel also has a few indirect borrowings from Henry's chronicle in depicting the ancient Estonians: in one place the dog of the antagonist, a young German baron, is called 'Tarapita' for mocking the local culture.

⁷⁴ Saal's most influential historical novels were: *Wambola: Jutustus wanast Eesti ajaloost* (1209–1212) (Tartu, 1889); *Aita: jutustus Liiwi ja Eestirahwa wabaduse wõitlusest 12. aastasaja lõpul* (Tallinn, 1892); *Leili, üks pagana naine: Jutustus Liiwirahwa wabaduse wõitlusest 13. aastasaja algul* (Paide, 1892–93). He also published a two-volume history book, *Päris ja prii*, in which the first volume, *Eesti rahva pärisorjuse ajalugu 1215–1819* (Rakvere, 1891) focused mainly on the crusades.

the spirit of revenge that proliferates Bornhöhe's work, Saal's writing presents melancholic and sentimental stories about the loss of ancient paradise.

Historical novels represent national imagination at work, and are thus best understood against a backdrop of the contemporary society of their author.⁷⁵ The overwhelming representation of the medieval period as a struggle against the Germans corresponded well with the situation in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Estonia and Latvia. Historical fiction also projected upon the past an image of a national community with markedly peasant characteristics, that likewise matched the contemporary experiences of its readership. However, early historical fiction also created a pantheon of ancient heroes and nobility. Amongst these, the natives mentioned by Henry gained a prominent place and could be located in many period novels to affirm the deeds of fictive characters. Saal's novels illustrate this tendency particularly well. In addition, the Enlightenment heritage contributed to this story-world. A good example of this is Garlieb Merkel's tale *Wannem Ymanta* (1802) with its protagonist, the Livish chieftain Ymanta.⁷⁶

All these ancient heroes, including characters from Henry's chronicle who had been reanimated during the nationalist movement, found great momentum during the Estonian and Latvian War of Independence (both 1918–20), which followed World War I, the collapse of the Russian Empire and the Russian Civil War. These wars were fought against not only the Soviet Red Army, but also the German *Landeswehr*, and thus the analogies to crusade ideally suited a propaganda need. The 'Red' side also drew upon ancient heroes. For example, during the Russian Civil War, one group of Red Latvian soldiers formed a 'Regiment of Ymanta'. Such appropriations, however, were more prominent on the White side. In Estonian military ideology, Lembitu became the central ancient hero and his name was bestowed upon a gunboat and armoured car. In Henry's chronicle, Lembitu is presented as the most powerful Estonian chieftain who was based in Saccala. The chronicler mentions him eight times, more than any other Estonian.⁷⁷ The rise of Lembitu within Estonian cultural memory had only begun to originate in the late nineteenth century. Though the first nationalist historians had also mentioned him, it is only with the

⁷⁵ See Miroslav Hroch, 'Historical Belles-lettres as a Vehicle of the Image of National History', in *National History and Identity: Approaches to the Writing of National History in the North-East Baltic Region, 19th and 20th Centuries*, ed. Michael Branch (Helsinki, 1999), pp. 97–110 (here 100–101).

⁷⁶ Garlieb Helwig Merkel, *Wannem Ymanta: Eine lettische Sage* (Leipzig, 1802).

⁷⁷ In Henry's chronicle, Lembitu is mentioned in HCL XIV.12, p. 86, XV.7, p. 94, XV.9, p. 99, XV.10, p. 100, XVIII.7, p. 120, XIX.1, p. 122, XXI.2–3, pp. 141–3, XXV.2, p. 180.

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Figure 17.4 A monument of Lembitu in Suure-Jaani (Estonia). Sculptor: Amandus Adamson. Bronze. 1926 © Estonian Film Archives

novelists that Lembitu was reimagined as a symbolic figure. Even after the War of Independence, several war machines (for instance, a submarine) were named *Lembit(u)* and his image continued to be held up as the national and masculine ideal, as well as an important model for the soldiers of the new state's army.⁷⁸ While hardly any monuments to the crusades in Estonia and Latvia were produced during the interwar period, an exception was the re-use of the ancient heroes on the monuments erected to honour the War of Independence. In 1926, a figure of Lembitu was used for one such monument erected in Suure-Jaani (see Figure 17.4). This town is located next to the Lõhavere hillfort, which is believed to be 'the fort of Lembit, which is called Leole' mentioned in Henry's chronicle.⁷⁹ Also the Freedom Monument in Riga (1935, sculptor Kārlis Zāle [1888–1942]), which commemorates the soldiers killed during the War of Independence, depicts on its relief *Guards of the Fatherland* an ancient Latvian warrior who stands between two kneeling modern soldiers. Once more, this leads us to the functionality of the ancient past in promoting identity within new states.

⁷⁸ For the uses of Lembitu as a military role model, see Selart, 'Muistne vabadusvõitlus', pp. 112–13.

⁷⁹ HCL XVIII.7, p. 120; Brundage, p. 139.

Independent and Soviet Histories

The founding of the Estonian and Latvian states brought along changes in the crusading narrative and its memory at all policy levels of official nationalism. This affected education, the writing of history, militarism, propaganda and other affirmations of national identity. After 1934, when Konstantin Päts (1874–1956) and Kārlis Ulmanis (1877–1942) established authoritarian regimes in Estonia and Latvia, state-managed nationalism produced conservative policies that were adapted from the popular nationalism that had preceded them. Anti Selart has pointed to a change in the meaning of the ‘ancient fight for freedom’. First its goal was argued to have been the abolishment of serfdom, but it gradually became linked with a desire for political independence.⁸⁰ Along with this development, the concept of ancient independent states was born as the new states sought to claim ownership of their heritage. The first use of this strategy can be seen as early as in their successive declarations of independence.⁸¹ In both countries the narratives of the lost war against the crusaders (re-christened ‘the ancient fight for freedom’, Est. *muistne vabadusvõitlus*) and the victorious War of Independence (literally ‘Freedom War’, Est. *Vabadussõda*, Latv. *Latvijas brīvības cīņas*) were bound together.⁸² The Latvian silent film *Lāčplēsis* (1930, directed by Aleksandrs Rusteiķis) visualizes the amalgamation well: while its opening scene presents motives and characters from the epic, its following scenes depict the 1905 revolution, World War I and the War of Independence all as part of the same fight.⁸³

⁸⁰ Selart, ‘Muistne vabadusvõitlus’, p. 110.

⁸¹ For a brief analysis of the use of history in the ‘birth certificates’ of the first Estonian republic, see Sulev Vahtre, ‘Die Geschichtschreibung und die Historiker in Estland in den Kritischen Jahren 1918/1919 und 1987/1989’, JBS 25/2 (1994), 147–52.

⁸² Karsten Brüggemann, ‘Etnische Erinnerungsorte: Die Schlacht von Wenden gegen die Baltische Landeswehr im Juni 1919 als Höhepunkt der nationalen Geschichte’, *Eurozine* (2004), online at: <<http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2004-03-09-brueggemann-de.html>> (6 June 2010). In the Estonian case, a good example of this is the official history of the War of Independence that starts with a brief introduction and images about ‘the ancient independence and fight for freedom’: see *Eesti Vabadussõda 1918–1920*, vol. 1 (Tallinn, 1937), pp. 11–14. Even though the concept of a ‘fight for freedom’ had been used in describing the crusading period by the early twentieth century, the term ‘ancient war for freedom’ became commonplace only after 1920. For its genesis, see Selart, ‘Muistne vabadusvõitlus’, pp. 112–14.

⁸³ Stefan Donecker, ‘Collective Memory and Historical Myths in Latvian Cinema: The Silent Movie *Lāčplēsis* (1930)’, in *Transformationsprozesse im Ostseeraum und die osteuropäische Erfahrung*, ed. Imbi Sooman (Vienna, 2005).

As argued by the Latvian historian Ilgvars Mišāns, while Latvian national history was focused on the crusades, what interested the historians most were the Latvian warriors and their continuous fight against foreign conquerors from the medieval period on. Differing from the Estonian case, in Latvia the first stage of the ancient fight for freedom did not end with Henry's chronicle (1227). Rather, the Latvians have often been identified with the Semgallians who resisted the Teutonic Order until the 1290s. Due to the confrontation with Baltic-Germans, the studies into the crusades inspired large public interest whilst simultaneously binding it tightly with nationalist-Romantic wishful thinking.⁸⁴ During the interwar period, one of the few voices that differed from this imbalanced approach was Vilis Bīlkins (1887–1974), a student of Leonid Arbusow Jr and a scholar of Henry's chronicle.⁸⁵

In the Estonian case, the concept of an 'eternal fight for freedom' was to become the trigger for the historical narrative as a whole. According to the discourse, the fight to regain the freedom lost to the crusaders continued with the rebellion of St George's Night, the modern 'peasant wars', and was only to be realized with the War of Independence and the founding of a modern nation state.⁸⁶ Stressing that the ancient war was a first step in what was to be a long and eventually victorious national fight against foreign invasion also enabled coming to terms with the fact that the catalysing event in Estonian national history was a lost war. The crusades became symbolically associated with heroic resistance rather than defeat. This reimagining was well suited for the nationalist-pedagogical need of the late 1930s. A leading historian of the period, Hans Kruus (1891–1976), monumentalized this interpretation in a three-volume *Estonian History* (1935–40), of which he was chief editor. In these volumes 'the ancient fight for freedom' is put into the service of present national interests and presented as an everlasting source of national pride that 'lasts as long as the Estonian nation lives and fights'.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ Ilgvars Mišāns, "Wir waren immer ein Kriegervolk" Die darstellung der ostbaltischen Kreuzzüge in der lettischen Geschichtschreibung, in *Lippe und Livland: Mittelalterliche Herrschaftsbildung im Zeichen der Rose*, ed. Jutta Prieur (Bielefeld, 2008), pp. 185–207, esp. 187–91.

⁸⁵ Differently from other national histories, in his main study, *Die Spuren von Vulgata, Brevier und Missale in der Sprache von Heinrichs Chronikon Livoniae* (Riga, 1928), and in his other works on Henry's chronicle, Vilis Bīlkins places emphasis on the religious motivation of the crusaders.

⁸⁶ For an analysis of the 'eternal fight for freedom' as a narrative template, see Marek Tamm, 'History as Cultural Memory: Mnemohistory and the Construction of the Estonian Nation', *JBS* 39/4 (2008), 499–516.

⁸⁷ *Eesti ajalugu I: Esiajalugu ja muistne vabadusvõitlus*, ed. Hans Kruus and Harri Moora (Tartu, 1935), p. 376. For an introduction to Hans Kruus's views, see Sirje Kivimäe

The prominence of crusading granted Henry's chronicle a visible role in the national history. Yet, the making of an ancient Estonian proto-state and equating the crusades with modern politics (as a proto-aggression) also meant another round of rather radical rereadings of his chronicle. The most colourful examples of this are the writings of the Estonian public intellectual and psychiatrist Juhan Luiga (1873–1927), especially his lengthy 'Critique of Henry the Latvian's Chronicle'.⁸⁸ In it he argues that the present version of Henry's chronicle radically differs from the original, being full of alterations and interpolations. According to Luiga, Henry wrote the chronicle for Bishop Albert of Riga (1199–1229), but when Albert died, the Order intervened and had it rewritten as it suited them better.⁸⁹ Moreover, he suggests that there existed an earlier missionary chronicle, which he calls the 'Chronicle of Theodoric'. Though Luiga's approach was more extreme than those of the mainstream, the ideas he presented were not unique. Rather, they vocalized a yearning typical to Estonian cultural memory, that of the need for another historical narrative. His article seeks to fulfil two dreams: first, that the preserved chronicles would be exposed as forgery, and second, that there could be found some other, previously unknown chronicle or document, that could falsify the existing narrative. The article introduces numerous interpolations which Luiga believes to have discovered that, according to him, give the chronicle 'a misleading tone and our history an unreal shape'.⁹⁰ In so doing, he argues, they stress the barbarity of the Estonians and cover up their attempts to establish peace in the region. Luiga's aims, as well as the anxieties and dreams related to ancient Estonia that he seeks to redress, are revealed well in the following: '[I]f we leave aside the chronicle's interpolations, Estonian statehood reveals itself much more complete, developed to a quite high level, Estonian foreign policy shows much more planning, system and the relationship to the neighbours is much more "civilised", natural, humane'.⁹¹ Even

and Jüri Kivimäe, 'Hans Kruus und die deutsch-estnische Kontroverse', in *Zwischen Konfrontation und Kompromiss*, ed. Michael Garleff (Munich, 1995), pp. 155–70.

⁸⁸ Juhan Luiga, 'Läti Hendriku kroonika kriitika', *Eesti Kirjandus* 4 (1922), 127–39; 5 (1922), 145–60; 6 (1922), 193–202; 7 (1922), 217–28; 9 (1922), 289–309; 12 (1922), 385–407; 1 (1923), 19–37; 2 (1923), 63–72; 4 (1923), 151–7; 5–6 (1923), 211–43; 11 (1923), 495–530; 10 (1926), 481–515.

⁸⁹ Similarly, Luiga argued that the Teutonic Order had changed the accounts of the St George's Night Uprising (1343–45). See his *Eesti vabadusvõitlus 1343–1345: Harju mäss* (Tallinn, 1924).

⁹⁰ Luiga, 'Läti Hendriku kroonika kriitika', *Eesti Kirjandus* 4 (1922), p. 133.

⁹¹ Luiga, 'Läti Hendriku kroonika kriitika', *Eesti Kirjandus* 9 (1922), p. 289. Luiga was especially fascinated with Lembitu and argued against Henry's representation in his 'Lembitu välispoliitika', *Eesti Kirjandus* 8 (1921), 9 (1921), 10 (1921), 11 (1921), and 'Lembitus Wytamas', *Eesti Kirjandus* 1 (1921).

the defeat of the Estonians Luiga explains as a society being ahead of their time, as their democratic 'people's government' was destroyed by the more aggressive (and pre-modern) feudal system.

Indeed, an important element for the image of an Estonian proto-state was the idea of 'ancient democracy'. To augment this description, Henry's mention of the meeting in Raikküla (see above) continued to be widely appropriated. An especially ardent propagator of Raikküla as a proto-parliament was Jüri Uluots (1890–1945), an Estonian statesman, legal historian and theorist who advanced notions of the historical continuity of the Estonian republic as an heir of the ancient Estonia.⁹² Interestingly, in Latvia an opposite trend can be identified. Unlike the Estonian interpretation emphasizing the egalitarianism of the ancient society, Latvian historians and archaeologists, such as Francis Balodis (1882–1947), strove to find traces of the ancient nobility.⁹³ The quest for the Lettgallian, Semgallian, and Curonian nobility and kings drew on Henry's use of terms such as *rex*.⁹⁴ This helped to inspire ideas about the Lettgallian/Latvian kingdom of Gerzike (Latv. Jersika). Visvaldis (Vissewalde, Vsevolod), called the king of Gerzike by Henry, gained a prominent place in the national pantheon.⁹⁵ In the Soviet period the interpretations became unified, as it was argued that the formation of early feudalism existed all over the Late Iron Age Baltics. Today the Latvian and Estonian visions again suggest exactly the opposite: in Estonia the egalitarian model has been replaced by ideas about socially differentiated society, and Latvian researchers have come to question the existence of a strong nobility.⁹⁶

⁹² HCL XX.2, p. 135. Uluots interpreted Henry's description of the Raikküla meeting as a proof of 'the democratic organisation of the ancient Estonian state' that, according to him, was a confederation of land-states (Est. *maariik*). See Jüri Uluots, 'Eesti muistest riiklikust ja ühiskondlikust korrast', *Looming* 6 (1932); 'Vana-Eesti rahvakoosolekutest', *Õigus* 18/8 (1937), 337–43. His ideas of its legal continuity are put forward in *Die Verträge der Esten mit den Fremden im XIII Jahrhundert* (Tartu, 1937).

⁹³ For an historiographical overview, see Andris Šnē, 'Stammesfürstentum und Egalität: Die sozialen Beziehungen auf dem Territorium Lettlands am Ende der prähistorischen Zeit (10.–12. Jahrhundert)', *Forschungen zur baltischen Geschichte* 3 (2008), 33–56.

⁹⁴ Misāns, 'Wir waren immer ein Kriegervolk', pp. 190–91. For a discussion of Henry's socio-feudal terminology, see Enn Tarvel, 'Die Interpretation der sozialhistorischen Terminologie in den livländischen Geschichtsquellen des 13. Jahrhunderts', in *The European Frontier: Clashes and Compromises in the Middle Ages*, ed. Jörn Staecker (Lund, 2004), pp. 311–14.

⁹⁵ Visvaldis was also portrayed (1935) by the prominent Latvian painter, Ludolf Liberts (1862–1959).

⁹⁶ See Šnē, 'Stammesfürstentum und Egalität'; Heiki Valk, 'Estland im 11.–13. Jahrhundert. Neuere Aspekte aus Sicht der Archäologie', *Forschungen zur baltischen Geschichte* 2 (2008), 57–86.

The 1930s were characterized by the favouring of 'national scholarly disciplines' such as archaeology, ethnography, folkloristics or history. Scholars in these areas were dedicated to reconstructions of the 'authentic' and the 'ancient' (folklore, religion, customs, and so on), understood as the base of national values and culture. Specialization thus secured Henry a more neutral role in the national canon as the oldest source dealing with Estonian language, ethnography and folklore, and as a guidebook for archaeological material. The late 1930s, however, bore witness to the co-development of national scholarly disciplines and historical fiction, which also aimed at reconstructions of the ancient way of life.⁹⁷ This period saw a boom in historical novels that replaced tragic victim perspectives with militant narratives of past glory. Not surprisingly, the most victorious scene from Henry's chronicle (from the Estonian perspective) was now appropriated for fiction. In 1934, Mait Metsanurk published *Ümera jõel* ('On the Ümera River'). It retells the story of the Ümera (Latv. Jumara) battle (1210) where, according to Henry, Estonian troops caught the joint army of the Sword Brethren, Lettgallians and Livs by surprise and destroyed it.⁹⁸ Indeed, it provides one of the very few victories in the record of Estonian nationalist history. There were also other novels that drew on Henry to contribute to the story-world of the crusades.⁹⁹ The most illuminating examples of 1930s fiction, however, are the Viking novels. They are part of a wider trend of distancing from the German *Kulturraum* (the former colonizer) and promoting the Scandinavian orientation (the short-lived but idealized colonizer), which spread in both Estonia and Latvia.¹⁰⁰ This enthusiasm towards paganism, the Vikings and the Nordic race also reflects the general spirit of the time, and was, for instance, widely appropriated in Nazi Germany. In the Estonian (as well as Latvian) case there is a lack of sources on the Viking period and this enabled more flexible mythmaking. The desire to construct a joint history with Scandinavia also suggested a move away from the German-minded Henry (moreover, due to the rivalry between Riga and Lund it would be difficult to find anything pro-Scandinavian from his chronicle) and transformed the relationship to the chronicle. The Viking

⁹⁷ As has also been pointed out in Tiina Ann Kirss, 'Taking Sigtuna: Precolonial Time and Estonian Historical Fiction of the 1930s', *Interlitteraria* 13 (2008), 214–28 (here 224).

⁹⁸ Mait Metsanurk, *Ümera jõel* (Tartu, 1934). Henry of Livonia narrates the first battle of Ümera in HCL XIV.8, p. 79–81. Henry even mentions several of the fallen Christians by name and calls it 'martyrdom'.

⁹⁹ One of the most prominent crusading novels that dealt with events related to Lembitu was *Loojak* ('Decline') by Karl August Hindrey. See his *Loojak, I: Nõid* (Tartu, 1938), *Loojak, II: Lembitu* (Tartu, 1938).

¹⁰⁰ Misāns, 'Wir waren immer ein Kriegervolk', p. 188.

novels therefore present compelling counter-narratives to colonial humiliation. In the words of the literary theorist Tiina Ann Kirss, 'the constructed past, the precolonial golden age is a substitute that compensates, rhetorically and ideologically, for later complexes of inferiority, marginality, subalterity'.¹⁰¹ Yet, demonstrating that Henry's narrative of subjection did not vanish entirely, the most emblematic Viking novel, *Läänemere isandad* ('Lords of the Baltic Sea') (1936) by August Mälk starts by adapting a colonial scene from Henry's chronicle. Mälk's protagonists, the Öselians, see at the trading centre of Üxküll (Latv. Ikšķile) the first coming of the Saxon merchants and missionaries to the Livish settlements along the Düna (Latv. Daugava, Est. Väina) River.¹⁰²

Thus the Estonian cultural memory was able to considerably expand its narrative sphere and strategies. However, not many additions were added to the existing record in this visualization of the past. This scarceness may seem striking, especially when compared to the experience of neighbouring young nations.¹⁰³ The reason may lie with an ideological opposition on the part of the artists, or the lack of victorious moments in the national historical narrative.¹⁰⁴ Even as late as the 1920s–30s the ancient past was narrated rather than visualized, and thus the Estonian cultural memory did not encompass almost any known visualizations of the crusades, or Henry's chronicle, save a small number of illustrations to fiction and textbooks. From among these the drawings and paintings in the standard 'Estonian History' (1935–40) have become stock illustrations of the Estonian Middle Ages, and reproduced on countless occasions. Interestingly, 'The Siege of Muhu Stronghold' by Ott Kangilaski (1911–75) has been most widely reproduced (see Figure 17.5). It is a historic genre painting depicting one of the final scenes of the chronicle, the capture of the hillfort in Moon (Est. Muhu) (1227).¹⁰⁵ Even though from the perspective of national narrative it visualizes a decisive loss in the 'ancient fight for freedom', it likely owes its popularity to the dynamics and dramatics of the battle scene (and perhaps also

¹⁰¹ Kirss, 'Taking Sigtuna', p. 216. The most influential of the Viking novels were Karl August Hindrey, *Urmas ja Merike* ('Urmas and Merike') (Tartu, 1935–36) and August Mälk, *Läänemere isandad* ('Lords of the Baltic Sea') (Tartu, 1936).

¹⁰² Borrowing from HCL I.2, p. 2 and his books I and II in general. This connection has also been pointed out in Kirss, 'Taking Sigtuna', p. 222.

¹⁰³ See Derek Fewster, *Visions of Past Glory: Nationalism and the Construction of Early Finnish History* (Helsinki, 2006), esp. pp. 188–284.

¹⁰⁴ As has been suggested in Tiina Abel, 'Between Scylla and Charybdis: International and Vernacular in the Estonian Art of the 1930s', in *Modernity and Identity: Art in 1918–1940*, ed. Jolita Mulevičiute (Vilnius, 2000), pp. 141–55.

¹⁰⁵ HCL XXX.4, pp. 217–19.

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Figure 17.5 Ott Kängilaski, 'Muhu linnuse vallutamise' ('The Siege of Muhu Stronghold'). The painting is based on an illustration in the first volume (1935) of the pre-war standard 'Estonian History'. Watercolour. 1941. © Estonian History Museum

to the decorative beige-red colour scheme), suggesting that even losses can be represented magnificently.

Next to national disciplines and fiction, performances became another chief medium in the appropriation of Henry's chronicle. Already in the early twentieth century, the crusades had inspired one of the first Estonian operas, Artur Lemba's *Lembitu tütar* ('The Daughter of Lembitu', libretto by the prominent poetess Anna Haava [1864–1957]) (1908). In the 1930s a tradition was established of re-performing the 'ancient fight for freedom' in open-air plays. Quite tellingly, such performances found their way into the repertoire of song festivals that were (and still are) prominent celebrations of Estonian nationalism and identity.¹⁰⁶ During the 1938 song festival, an open-air performance 'For the Freedom of the Land' (by the poet Henrik Visnapuu [1890–1951] and composer Eugen Kapp) was performed. Hellar Grabbi (b. 1929), later a prominent figure in the Estonian exile community, remembers attending the event as a small boy: 'Horsemen galloped from one side of the song festival ground to the other, warriors cried out and ran through the people, battle-axes whirled, spears zipped by and at the song festival stage merciless sword fights took place, women in folk costumes sang and Estonian chieftains gave speeches.'¹⁰⁷

The 1920–30s also witnessed the (re)construction and (re)performance of ancient pagan 'land religion' (Est. *maausk*) or 'Taara religion'. Officially registered in 1932 as the religious society 'Grove' (Est. *Hiis*),¹⁰⁸ it is a good example of modernity's longing for the ancient. The new cult began its chronology from the proclamation of the Estonian republic (1918), yet sought to embody 'ancient' values and practices. Not surprisingly, the cult possessed a strong ritual component, suggesting a need for performances of authenticity. The identity of the movement was thus constructed hand in hand with its ritual system (the performance of ancient rites [Est. *taigad*]). In Latvia during the 1920s the *Dievturi* movement was established, which likewise aimed at the revival of the ancient religion (owing much to Merkel's pantheon of Latvian gods). In both Estonia and Latvia these movements were re-enlivened in the 1990s, when rapid social and ideological changes again created a longing for authentic and ancient values and practices.

During the 1920–30s the Latvian and Estonian narrative and imageries of the crusades expanded in ways that were more coherent and one-sided. Paradoxically

¹⁰⁶ See Kristin Kuutma, 'Cultural Identity, Nationalism and Changes in Singing Traditions', *Folklore* 7 (1998), 12–26.

¹⁰⁷ Hellar Grabbi, *Vabariigi laps* (Tartu, 2008), p. 172. The play has been published as Henrik Visnapuu, *Maa vabaduse eest* (Tallinn, 1938).

¹⁰⁸ A good overview of the society's activities was published in its journal, *Hiis* ('Grove'): see 'Taara avitab', *Hiis* 4 (1933), 87–91.

the pre-war nationalist scheme was also used during the Soviet period. Narratives about the peasant fight against German overlords matched the principal subject of historical materialism, that is, class struggle.¹⁰⁹ The early Soviet period also produced the first Marxist interpretation of Henry's chronicle by the Latvian historian Jānis Zutis (1893–1962).¹¹⁰ According to the Soviet narrative, victory was achieved not with the War of Independence, but with the establishment of the Soviet regime (1940, 1944). The opposition of the natives and the 'German robber-conquerors' also relied on World War II propaganda that drew analogies between Nazi troops and the Teutonic Knights and German crusaders. This, in turn, continued from the nineteenth-century *Drang nach Osten* critiques.¹¹¹ As a result, one can notice a certain radicalization of enemy images. Indeed, as the Soviet historiography was characterized by a strong anti-German attitude, the pre-war principles of national history were adopted without many problems.¹¹²

Next to class struggle, the ancient Russian and Estonian-Latvian friendship was the other subject favoured in the Soviet teaching of history.¹¹³ In this context, the Baltic crusades were conceptualized as part of the militant aggression into Eastern Europe by Western European feudalism and the papal church. According to this version, the Russians' role in Baltic medieval history was

¹⁰⁹ For a brief introduction, see Jüri Kivimäe, 'Re-writing Estonian History?', in *National History and Identity: Approaches to the Writing of National History in the North-East Baltic Region, 19th and 20th Centuries*, ed. Michael Branch (Helsinki, 1999), pp. 205–12 (here 209).

¹¹⁰ Yan Zutis, *Очерки по историографии Латвии*, vol. 1: Прибалтийско-немецкая историография (Riga, 1949).

¹¹¹ See Wolfgang Wippermann, *Der 'deutsche Drang nach Osten': Ideologie und Wirklichkeit eines politischen Schlagwortes* (Darmstadt, 1981); Hans-Heinrich Nolte, *'Drang nach Osten': Sowjetische Geschichtsschreibung der deutschen Ostexpansion* (Frankfurt am Main, 1976).

¹¹² As also argued by Misāns, 'Wir waren immer ein Kriegervolk', pp. 191–8. For the Soviet historiography, cf. Frithjof Benjamin Schenk, *Aleksandr Nevskij. Heiliger – Fürst – Nationalheld. Eine Erinnerungsfigur im russischen kulturellen Gedächtnis (1263–2000)* (Cologne, 2004). Indeed, the best-known comparisons of the Baltic crusades to present-day politics are the films 'Alexander Nevsky' (1938) and 'Ivan the Terrible' (1944–46) by the Soviet director Sergei Eisenstein (1898–1948).

¹¹³ This tradition is not new, but rather had already been introduced to Estonian-language histories during the Czarist period of the late nineteenth century and relied to a great extent on Henry's remarks about the cooperation of the Estonians and the Russians. See Viires, 'Eestlaste ajalooteadvus', pp. 32–4. Likewise, in Latvia, accounts of the Russian influence in Lettgallian lands were appropriated from Henry. Illuminating examples of this approach during the Soviet period are the official standard post-war Estonian and Latvian histories, respectively *Eesti NSV ajalugu*, I, ed. Gustav Naan and Artur Vassar (Tallinn, 1955) and *Latvijas PSR vēstures*, ed. Jānis Zutis (Riga, 1953).

understood as that of a saviour of local peoples in their fight against foreign conquerors and colonizers (similar to the image of the Red Army in World War II). In the Estonian cultural memory, it was again a work of historical fiction, Enn Koppel's (1901–42) youth novel *Meelis* (1941), that gave the most prominent affirmation of this eternal friendship. In this piece an Estonian boy, Meelis (a fictive character), fights together with Vetseke (Russ. Vyachko, a character from Henry's chronicle) against the Germans. The main protagonist, Meelis, illustrates well a plot device taken from Henry in Estonian historical novels: the stories of young boys who are held hostage by Germans and later return to continue the fight. These rely on Henry's accounts of how the native chieftains had to grant peace by handing over their sons (a pattern also used in the Latvian tradition, see below). Vetseke, originally a vassal of Polotsk and a Prince of Kokenhusen (or Kukuensis, Lavt. Koknese), according to Henry at first became a vassal of Bishop Albert, yet, after a failed attempt to take Riga with the Polotskians, fled to Russia. In 1223, after an Estonian uprising against the Rigan Christians, Vetseke was granted men and money by Novgorod to establish himself in Dorpat. The crusaders, however, managed to take Dorpat in 1224 and Vetseke was killed along with the other defenders of the fort. While for Henry Vetseke is 'like a snare and a great devil',¹¹⁴ for the Soviet historiography his action during the defence of Dorpat was a symbol of the two nations' friendship against a common enemy (the German colonizers). In 1980, this joint heroism was made manifest in space. As a part of Tartu's 950th jubilee year programme, there was erected near the ancient hillfort a monument to Meelis and Vetseke, which had originally been designed by the sculptor Olav Männi (1925–80) as early as 1950 (see Figure 17.6). Indeed, during the Soviet period a few other monuments were constructed to commemorate the fight against the thirteenth-century German conquerors. In Estonia, the greatest was the monument for the defenders of Saccala in 1217–1223 (erected in 1969, authors Renaldo Veeber and Ülo Stöör) that was placed in Lõhavere, in the area that had previously also been used for monumentalizing the links between the ancient fight for freedom and the War of Independence (see above).

Regarding the presence of the chronicle's text itself, the first twentieth-century Estonian translation of Henry's chronicle was produced by an exile publisher in Stockholm in 1962. In the Soviet Estonia a new, facing translation appeared in 1982 and in Latvia only in 1993.¹¹⁵ Though the Estonian 1982

¹¹⁴ HCL XXVIII.2, p. 201; Brundage, p. 221. Vyachko is also mentioned in HCL IX.10, p. 30–31, XI.2, p. 48, XIII.1, pp. 66–7, XXV.2, XXVII.5, p. 197–8, XXVIII.1, p. 199, XXVIII.3, p. 201, XXVIII.5, p. 203.

¹¹⁵ *Henriku Liivimaa kroonika*, trans. Julius Mägiste (Stockholm, 1962). *Henriku Liivimaa kroonika*, trans. Richard Kleis, ed., notes and introduction Enn Tarvel (Tallinn,



Figure 17.6 A monument to Meelis and Vetseke in Tartu, Estonia. Sculptor: Olav Männi. Bronze. Designed 1950, erected in Tartu in 1980
© Tartu City Museum

edition had a large print-run (15,000 copies) typical of Soviet publishing, it sold out almost immediately. During the Soviet period, however, only a few studies were conducted into the chronicle itself. Emblematic of the attitude towards Henry is *Hõbevalge* ('Silverwhite', 1976), a popular book by Lennart Meri (1929–2006), the later President of Estonia. This mythologizing reconstruction of the ancient history of the Baltic Sea region demonstrates the enthusiasm of the late 1970s and early 1980s towards the ethnic and Finno-Ugric past. It sought to advance an alternative history of ancient Estonia, presenting a mishmash of associations from Kaali meteorite to the fourth-century BC Greek geographer Pytheas of Massilia, as well as Arabian chronicles, and placed the Estonians in the centre of European history. Meri was not unaware that his vision of ancient glory differed considerably from Henry's version of the past. 'Henry does not lie. He keeps silence. ... We should appreciate more highly his ability to keep silence

1982). *Indriķa hronika*, trans. Ābrams Feldhūns, notes and introduction Ēvalds Mugarēvičs (Riga, 1993). See also Chapter 16 by Tiina Kala in this volume.

in a captivating and truth-like manner.¹¹⁶ Indeed, the book is a remarkable sign of another, equally confident meta-narrative shift, as it openly replaces Henry's chronicle with folklore and favours narratives that better suit a poetic vision.

During the period of regaining independence in the Baltic in 1991, the usage of history played an important role in the project that in Estonia has been called the creation of a 'republic of historians'.¹¹⁷ The metaphor of 'national re-awakening' was used, linking the contemporary-era time to that of the nineteenth-century nationalist 'awakening'. This included nationalist guidelines being reapplied to the writing of history.¹¹⁸ A good example of the restoration of traditional nationalist history was 'The Waning of the Ancient Times in Estonia: The Fight for Freedom in 1208–1227' (1990) by Professor Sulev Vahtre (1926–2007). The book offers an almost line-by-line translation of Henry's chronicle into a national historical narrative, revealing the level to which traditional, positivistic historical discourse depends on the chronicle. To this point, it has also remained the only Estonian book in which the crusades have been introduced to a wider audience.

New values that were propagated especially before Latvia and Estonia joined the European Union, however, complicated history writing. On one hand, the crusades still dominated medieval history and were represented as a lost tragic 'ancient fight for freedom'. On the other, a 'Europeanization' narrative has complemented the traditional story. That these narratives can exist in parallel, but not in dialogue, is shown in a recent history textbook where the chapter following the traditional representation of the 'ancient fight for freedom' is titled 'Estonia joins Western Europe'.¹¹⁹ Another example of this contradiction is the return of the sculpture of Henry's main protagonist, Bishop Albert, to Riga Cathedral. The figure, made by Karl Bernewitz (1897), disappeared during World War I. In 2001, the exiled Baltic-Germans donated its replacement to the city for its 800th jubilee. The gift was received with mixed feelings, however. While the sculpture fit well within the conjuncture of Europeanization, the subject featured has been viewed as an antagonistic figure in the national history.¹²⁰

¹¹⁶ Lennart Meri, *Hõbevalge* (Tallinn, 1976), pp. 412, 415.

¹¹⁷ Marek Tamm, "Vikerkaar ajalugu?" Märkmeid üleminekuaaja Eesti ajalookultuurist, *Vikerkaar* 7–8 (2006), 136–43.

¹¹⁸ Such as the popular 'Homeland Story': see Mart Laar, Lauri Vahtre and Heiki Valk, *Kodu lugu, I–II* (Tallinn, 1989). Cf. Linda Kaljundi, "Ein sicherer Halt": Zum Verhältnis von Geschichte und Analogieprinzip in "Kodu Lugu", *Forschungen zur baltischen Geschichte* 4 (2009), 238–48.

¹¹⁹ Eha Hergauk, Mart Laar and Maria Tilk, *Ajalugu 5. klassile*, 2nd rev. edn (Tallinn, 2002).

¹²⁰ Misāns, 'Wir waren immer ein Kriegervolk', p. 205.

Since the 1990s, and to a greater degree in the 2000s, the views of historians, art historians and archaeologists on the crusades and conversion have significantly altered, influenced by the boom in studying 'the making of Europe' and the emergence of more neutral concepts such as cultural encounters.¹²¹ Plurality has also increased in the popular culture of medievalism. This has included the appropriations of the crusades into popular media (though certainly, one could argue that the focus of memory conflicts has shifted to World War II and post-war history). There exists a growing tendency to perform events of ancient and medieval warfare, including those from Henry's chronicle. Next to professional staging, the popularity of re-enactment has added a new dimension to the relationship with Henry's past: the striving for personal and bodily experience. Such embodiment is closely linked to other fairly new aspects of popular medievalism designed to lead to the sensuous consumption (feeling, touching, smelling, and so on) of the Middle Ages, such as medieval markets, villages or restaurants. As it has elsewhere, in the Baltic countries hedonism has eased the tensions created by the dichotomies of the nationalist narrative.

Author, Author

There still exists, however, one significant body of issues that needs to be addressed in the history of the appropriations of Henry's chronicle – namely, that of the chronicler himself. Taking up from the earlier discussion, one could characterize Henry's chronicle as a marker of colonial trauma. It allowed for young nations to enter the sphere of written history and catalyse their own historical narrative. Yet, the chronicle also struck a wound in the ego of the young nations. Such uneasy relations resulted in complicated liaisons with Henry. The chronicler became a rather Janus-like figure. On the one hand, Henry was 'the father' of Latvian and Estonian history. On the other, he was a tyrant and stranger, one whose language and mind we do not understand – but whom our young and fragile national egos have had to accept and adapt, as well as continuously fight against and falsify.

The first problematic has traditionally been the question of Henry's nationality. It was Johann Daniel Gruber who created the tradition of 'Henry

¹²¹ For an introduction into the range of new studies, consult the bibliography of this volume, CCBF and CCMBF. Also the 'Culture Clash or Compromise' (1996–2005) project lead by Nils Blomkvist at Gotland University College and its numerous publications had a major role in changing the focus of Baltic medieval studies. For a broader perspective, see Sven Ekdahl, 'Crusades and Colonization in the Baltic', in *Palgrave Advances in the Crusades*, ed. Helen Nicholson (London, 2005), pp. 172–203.

the Latvian' (*Henricus Lettus*, *Henricus de Lettis*), as he stated in the first print edition of *Chronicon Livoniae* (1740) that its author was a Latvian.¹²² The subsequent German translators of the chronicle, Johann Gottfried Arndt (1747) and August Hansen (1853), maintained this view and referred to *Heinrich von Lettland*.¹²³ The studies written in other European languages took over the concept of 'Henry the Latvian' (or, *Henri le Letton*, or, *Henryk Lotewski*) and this was preserved well into the 1930s.¹²⁴ However, the Baltic-German scholars who initially stressed Henry's local origins were also amongst the first to question his nationality, such as Paul Eduard Jordan (1825–94).¹²⁵ As previously argued, in the late nineteenth century, competition amongst Latvians and Estonians and the pressures of Russification had complicated the Baltic-Germans' status. In these circumstances, and with the Romantic yearning for the German Middle Ages, it suited the Baltic-German community better that the famous chronicler be a German. When, in turn, Latvian historians started to claim Henry's origin, the dispute over the chronicler's nationality became a major feature of Baltic-German and Latvian polemics. Even though it is often difficult to ascertain the origin of medieval authors, parties have often appropriated these figures to aid in the reaching of their political goals. The dispute is also reflected in the historiography of the region, though a positive result of those arguments has been in-depth studies of the chronicle.

Not surprisingly, Henry's ethnicity has played a great role in Latvian national cultural memory. In the nineteenth century, Latvian national Romanticists regarded Henry as having been Latvian. For this they did not have to destroy any old, or create new, historiographical traditions, but could easily use the already

¹²² *Origines Livoniae sacrae et civilis, seu chronicon Livonicum vetus ...*, pp. II–IV. See also Chapter 3 by Jüri Kivimäe in this volume.

¹²³ See *Der Liefländischen Chronik Erster Theil von Liefland unter seinen ersten Bischöfen*; and *Origines Livoniae sacrae et civilis: Heinrich's des Letten älteste Chronik von Livland*.

¹²⁴ See, for instance, Jean Meuvret, *Histoire des Pays Baltiques: Lituanie–Lettonie, Estonie–Finlande* (Paris, 1934), p. 49; Henryk Łowmianski, *Studja nad początkami społeczeństwa i państwa litewskiego*, vol. 1 (Vilnius, 1931), p. XII; N. de Baumgarten, 'Polotzk et la Lithuanie. Une page d'histoire', *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, 2/1–2 (1936), 223–53 (here 227). Every so often, one still meets 'Henry the Latvian' in international scholarly writing: see, for instance, Thierry Canava, 'Les peuples fenniques dans la Chronique d'Henri le Letton', *Etudes finno-ougriennes* 26 (1994), 99–119; Endre Bojtár, *Foreword to the Past: A Cultural History of the Baltic People* (Budapest, 1999), p. 122; and *Enrico di Lettonia Chronicon Livoniae. La crociata del Nord (1184–1227)*, trans., notes and introduction Piero Bugiani (Livorno, 2005), esp. pp. XXXIX–XLV.

¹²⁵ Paul Jordan, 'Ueber den sogenannten Heinrich den Letten', *Das Inland* 23/14 (1858), cols 221–5.

existing version of Henry's origins. Yet, this interpretation has traditionally posed a problem, one that has not been fully resolved until the present period. Should Latvia be acknowledged as the heir to Livonia? In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Enlightenment stereotypes dominated the Latvian cultural memory. At the forefront were narratives of how German traders, missionaries and crusaders subjugated the natives into slavery. Yet, when dealing with the crusades as Henry described them, it is difficult to omit that from the start the Livs, Lettgallians and Wends had allied with the German newcomers and thus participated in the genesis of Livonia. Latvian nationalists dealt with this inconvenient problem by condemning the 'collaborationism' of Caupo, but kept silent over the cooperation of the Lettgallians and Germans. Meanwhile, although middle-class Latvians had largely adopted German language and socio-cultural habits, the ideological and political gap between Latvians and Baltic-Germans kept widening. In this situation, 'Henry the Latvian' remained one of the few remaining bridges across the cultural divide. For example, Andrejs Pumpurs, in his otherwise strongly anti-German national epic *Lāčplēsis*, depicted Henry as a Latvian youth who was educated in Germany and became a Christian priest in his native land. The epic recounts how Caupo took him 'with him to Germany, to learn the "German wisdom"':

The youths that Caupo brought
 With him to German shore
 Stayed with the monks who taught,
 And learned in cloisters more.
 Among them in that place
 One's later fame has grown;
 Although of *Latvian race*,
 As '*Henry*' he is known.¹²⁶

This interpretation seems to suit well the assumption that priests were recruited from among the local population and corresponds with Henry's account of Livish leaders handing over about 30 boys to Bishop Albert (a motif that has also been quite widely used in Estonian historical fiction). Although the chronicle tells of Livs, not Lettgallians, the nineteenth-century nationalists did not differentiate the peoples who had been living on the territory of contemporary Latvia. Later, in the 1930s, a heated discussion on Henry's origins began anew when Arveds Švābe (1888–1959), the founder of the Latvian national historiography,

¹²⁶ Andrejs Pumpurs, *Bearslayer: The Latvian Legend*, trans. Arthur Cropley, ed. Arthur Cropley, Ausma Cimdīņa and Kaspars Kļaviņš (Riga, 2007), p. 152 (our emphasis).

published an article 'Who Was Henry the Latvian?' (1938).¹²⁷ In it, he put forward several new arguments to prove the Latvian origins of Henry.

The Estonians also presented another closely related problem. The attitude of late nineteenth-century Latvian nationalists towards the Estonians was sympathetic. Unfortunately, upon reading Henry's chronicle, it is difficult to ignore the violent wars between Lettgallians and Estonians, and the Lettgallians' frequent and bloody raids into Estonia. These were dealt with in significant pieces of nationalist Romanticist poetry that always suggested Estonian aggression and claimed that it was only the peaceful policies of Lettgallians that managed to cease the conflict. These poems also often reference fragments of the chronicle that mention Henry's close ties with Lettgallians. An interesting example of this is the epic ballad *Beverīnas dziedonis* ('The Beverin Singer') by the poet Auseklis (Mikēlis Krogzemis [1850–79]). The ballad is based on the fragment that describes how the Estonians besieged the Lettgallians' fort in Beverin (1208). Auseklis, however, called the Estonians 'brothers' in order to underline the tragic character of such a war. According to the chronicle, a priest (likely Henry himself) took part in defending the fort, not with fighting, but rather with 'singing prayers to God on a musical instrument'.¹²⁸ The ballad was written for the first Latvian Song Festival (1873) as a hymn praising the victory of spiritual might over military might. Later, in 1891 and 1900, the national Romanticist composer Jāzeps Vītols (1863–1948) used the ballad for a choral song still sung at Latvian Song Festivals today. In Auseklis's poetry, Henry is depicted as an old Latvian priest, Waidelott (an image that Latvian national Romanticism borrowed from Old Prussian mythologies) with grey hair and a white beard and resembling the mythological national patriarch depicted on the flag of the Song Festival.

Disputes over Henry's nationality only calmed down after World War II. By then, Latvian scholars had lost interest in the question of Henry's ethnicity, partly due to the destruction of the Baltic-German community as a result of the *Umsiedlung* (expatriation) and war that had brought, at a high price, an end to the confrontation between the German and Latvian communities. The official Soviet histories treated Henry as a 'proponent of the aggressive crusaders', and Latvian scholars in exile regarded him as a medieval priest whose ethnicity was not relevant. Differently from the first republic of Latvia, however, when Henry was not portrayed in fiction, after World War II the version of Henry's Lettgallian or Livish origin survived almost exclusively in Latvian literature. Moreover,

¹²⁷ Arveds Švābe, 'Kas bija Latviešu Indriķis', *Senatne un Māksla* 4 (1938), 11–38. See also his 'Latviešu Indriķis un viņa hronika', in *Straumes un avoti*, vol. 2 (Riga, 1940), pp. 121–220.

¹²⁸ HCL XII.6, pp. 63–4; Brundage, p. 85.

during the Soviet period, it became an important symbol of opposition and/or collaboration. Vizma Belševica's (1931–2005) poem *Indriķa Latvieša piezīmes uz Livonijas hronikas malām* ('The Notations of Henry the Latvian in the Margins of the Livonian Chronicle' [1969]) became a manifesto of Latvian resistance, as it could be interpreted as suggesting similarities between papal and Soviet imperialism. In the poem, Henry (identified as a Latvian or Liv) writes the chronicle according to the conquerors' needs, yet suffers deeply as a patriot and, furthermore, curses 'his' people as a 'traitorous', 'servile and slavish' nation.¹²⁹ The poem also uses many citations from the chronicle. Later, in 1985, the prose of Jānis Kalniņš (1922–2000) used Henry to address tendentious history writing.¹³⁰ This was not a new tradition. Already the founding father of the study of Latvian national history, Jānis Krodznieks (1851–1924), had blamed Henry for collaboration, even though in many debates with Baltic-German historians Krodznieks had defended his local origin.¹³¹

Next to Henry himself, one of his characters is also closely bound to the theme of collaboration. This is the previously mentioned Caupo, the Livish chieftain who became a prototype for 'traitor'. Henry writes that he accepted baptism, travelled to Rome, met with Pope Innocent III and, upon his return, fought in the name of Christianity against his Livish countrymen. As a symbol for collaborator, Caupo was introduced in Merkel's story *Wannem Ymanta* (1802) (discussed above) that shows him to have been a selfish man motivated by a will to power.¹³² In the Latvian cultural memory, Caupo was a stereotypical collaborator that shows up not only in *belles-lettres*, art and music, but also in political journalism and literature. This began to change only during the late 1980s and 1990s. In this period, it began to be asked whether Caupo perhaps was not a 'traitor' (also his role in Soviet narratives), but a 'visionary' who wanted to join his people with those of Western Europe. During recent decades, he has thus become both the symbol of European integration and the object lesson of Euro-scepticism.¹³³

¹²⁹ Vizma Belševica, *Gadu gredzeni* ('Annual Rings') (Riga, 1969). See Gunars Salpiņš, 'On Allegory: Vizma Belševica's Poem "The Notations of Henricus de Lettis in the Margins of the Livonian Chronicle"', *Lituanus* 16/1 (1970), 22–32.

¹³⁰ Jānis Kalniņš, *Hronists un velns* (Riga, 1985).

¹³¹ See Misāns, 'Wir waren immer ein Kriegervolk', pp. 186–7.

¹³² See Detlef Henning, 'From Kangars to Rubiks: The Long Line of Traitors in the Historical Political Culture of Latvia', *JBS* 37/2 (2006), 179–93 (here 181–2).

¹³³ Henning, 'From Kangars to Rubiks', p. 181. See also Agita Misane, 'Velreiz par Kaupo vesturi sko un literaro dzlvi', *Karogs* 2 (2001), 194–206, and Misāns, 'Wir waren immer ein Kriegervolk', pp. 203–5.

The image of 'Henry the Latvian' today has not lost its symbolic meaning in Latvian fiction. Jānis Lejiņš's (1954) decorated trilogy *Zīmogs sarkanā vaskā* ('A Seal in Red Wax' [2001–09]) draws on Henry's chronicle amongst other sources. It focuses on the life of Tālvāldis (Thalibald, Thalibaldus), a Lettgallian chieftain who likely ruled over the Tālava region and the strongholds of Trikāta and Beverina. He represents one of the few characters from the chronicle whose biography, as presented by Henry, is well suited for the basing of a dramatic and adventurous protagonist.¹³⁴ The books have been welcomed for their unifying national and rather conservative message, as the author addresses the key issues of modern nationalism, such as the relationship between big and small nations, and forgotten ancient national values and (semi-mystic) skills.¹³⁵ In the beginning of the new millennium, Henry's text was also transformed into a rock opera *Indriķa hronika* ('The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia') (2000). Here the author of the libretto, Māra Zālīte, aimed at addressing the great conflicts of the modern world, the genesis of which she traces back to the thirteenth century. In a similar vein, she uses the character of 'Henry the Latvian' in an allegorical way to interpret the history of the Baltics in the twentieth century.¹³⁶

As the Estonians have never had to wonder seriously whether Henry was an Estonian, their relationship with Henry is not as complicated as it has been in Latvia. The beginning of Henry's cultural translation into an emerging Estonian narrative was marked by an eagerness to learn the sources of ancient history. Jaan Jung, the author of the chronicle's first translation into Estonian, advances one possible way to overcome the anxiety that characterizes the later rather disdainful and distrustful attitude towards Henry. Taking a patronizing stand, Jung argues that: 'altogether Henry the Latvian is very childish in his faith and mind, which is not surprising considering his times, because at that time everybody had such a childish faith, and even more so he as he was a priest.'¹³⁷ Curiously, an example of a similar attitude and one of the more enthusiastic calls for the study of Henry's chronicle can be found in a book by a prominent folklorist, Matthias Johann Eisen (1857–1934). Eisen authored the first Estonian biographical series 'Significant Men'. Its sixth volume (1884) is dedicated to 'Henry the

¹³⁴ Tālvāldis (T(h)alibald, T(h)alibaldus) is mentioned in HCL XII.6, p. 61; HCL XV.7, pp. 93–4; XVII.2, p. 113 (capture by and escape from the Lithuanians); XVIII.3, p. 116; XVIII.5, p. 119; XIX.3, p. 126 (torture and death at the hands of the Estonians).

¹³⁵ Ieva Kolmane, 'Kirjandus kriisi aja Lātis', *Vikerkaar* 7–8 (2010), 112–16 (here 115). The books of the trilogy are Janis Lejiņš, *Brāļi* ('Brothers' [Riga, 2001]), *Ķēniņš* ('The King' [Riga, 2004]), *Rūnas* ('Runes' [Riga, 2009]).

¹³⁶ Māra Zālīte, 'Indriķa hronika. Librets rokoperai pēc "Indriķa hronikas" u.c. vēstures avotu motīviem', in Māra Zālīte, *Sauciet to par teātri* (Riga, 2001), pp. 455–519.

¹³⁷ Jung, 'Eessõna', p. 5.

Latvian' and Heinrich Stahl (c. 1600–1657), the author of the first grammar of the Estonian language (1637). Eisen laments the lack of sources for the 'ancient life and ways of the Estonian people', and on the 'complete darkness that covers everything from you, so that you see nothing'.¹³⁸ He continues with Henry's eulogy, as in him: 'we have found the first book of time that gives quite a lot of messages about the Estonian people. ... As here we for the first time find the true knowledge, this book of time and its writer are very worthy of attention and it is the duty of every son of the fatherland and a lover of one's people to introduce himself to them both.'¹³⁹

As the opposition between 'our' and 'other' sources gradually began to dominate, however, Henry's chronicle came to be regarded as something alien. Moreover, it could be argued that Henry himself had been brushed aside and had not had any prominent position within Estonian cultural memory. The controversial father figure does not have a face: his only function seems to be to provide an eyewitness confirmation of the beginning of Estonian history and disappear the next moment. Thus, Henry's lower place can be understood when compared to the prominent role afforded to the other great Livonian chronicler, Balthasar Russow (c. 1536–1600). The national tradition considers Russow as Estonian, namely due to a suite of four novels, *Kolme katku vabel* ('Between Three Plagues', 1970–80), by Jaan Kross (1920–2007), one of the most important authors contributing to the cultural memory.¹⁴⁰ Henry is instead taken for a German and a spokesperson of the German perspective, even though he is still widely called *Läti Henrik* (which translates as both 'Henry the Latvian' and 'Henry of Latvia'). A good example of this approach is Karl August Hindrey's novel *Nõid* ('Witch' [1938]) which presents Henry (here a Germanized Lettgallian) as a zealous representative of the colonial gaze.¹⁴¹

There was a group of authors, however, which showed considerably greater interest or even sympathy towards the contributions of 'alien' agents and perspectives. These were the post-war exiled writers. The previously discussed Estonian translation of Henry's chronicle from 1962 was published jointly by two exile publishing houses, *Vaba Maa* ('A Free Land') and *Maarjamaa* ('The

¹³⁸ Matthias Johann Eisen, *Tähtsad mehed*, vol. 6 (Tartu, 1884), p. 3.

¹³⁹ Eisen, *Tähtsad mehed*, pp. 4–5.

¹⁴⁰ Jaan Kross, *Kolme katku vabel*, 4 vols (Tallinn, 1970, 1972, 1977, 1980). Kross drew on the hypothesis of the historian Paul Johansen: see Paul Johansen, *Balthasar Russow als Humanist und Geschichtsschreiber*, ed. Heinz von zur Mühlen (Cologne, 1996). Russow has also been personified in Estonian cultural memory by the legendary opera singer Georg Ots (1920–75), who portrayed him in a TV film 'Between Three Plagues' (1970), written by Jaan Kross.

¹⁴¹ Hindrey, *Loojak, I: Nõid*.

Land of Mary'). The latter was founded to introduce the Catholic tradition in Estonian. According to its founder, Vello Salo (b. 1925), in publishing Henry's chronicle they aimed to relieve the us-and-them dichotomy and the anti-clerical attitudes in the cultural memory.¹⁴² Similar tendencies can also be found in exile historical fiction. The best example of this is Ain Kalmus's (1906–2001) trilogy about the Christianization of Estonia. Contrasting with the previous tradition, his novels' protagonists accept Christianity voluntarily. Kalmus has chosen his main characters from among the first documented Christian Estonians: he focuses on Nicolaus (according to a letter [1170] by Pope Alexander III [1159–81], he was appointed the assistant of Fulco, the missionary bishop of Estonia) and Tabelinus, the baptized Estonian who is mentioned three times by Henry.¹⁴³ Developing these elements into a fictive plot, Kalmus abandoned the antagonism of the pagan and Christian world and pondered on the question of alternative histories, posing the counterfactual question of whether Estonia could have been Christianized without violence. While Kalmus's novels draw on Henry, another central exiled author, Bernard Kangro (1910–94) also addressed the problem of non-violent conversion in constructing a counter-narrative to Henry. This was the fictive diary of Andreas Sunesen, the archbishop of Lund (r. 1201–28) who led the Danish crusade to Estonia (1219).¹⁴⁴ Kangro's Andreas openly confronts his text with Henry's chronicle and remarks that the Danes 'should have appointed some young literate who would have written down all the important things ... As I knew that Albert of Bremen [that is, Bishop Albert] had chosen priest Henricus who at once recorded all the important events.' Once again, this reveals the desire for the existence and/or discovery of another chronicle of the Livonian crusades. Kangro's Andreas does not keep silent that he has 'serious doubts that Heinricus writes as it pleases Albert'.¹⁴⁵ One prominent author of the exile community, the cultural anthropologist and writer Ilmar Talve (1919–2007), wished to write a novel about Henry, but

¹⁴² Vello Salo, 'Veri ja vesi. Mõtteid ühe vana raamatu puhul', *Maarjamaa* 2 (1962). I would like to thank Vello Salo for providing this material (Linda Kaljundi).

¹⁴³ Ain Kalmus, *Jumalad labkuvad maalt* ('Gods Leave the Land') (Lund, 1956), *Toone tuuled üle maa* ('Toonela Winds Blow over the Land') (Lund, 1958), *Koju enne õhtut* ('Home before Evening') (Lund, 1964). For Henry's information, see HCL XXIII.7, p. 161; XXIV.1, p. 170. Later Henry also mentions 'the province of Tabellinus', HCL XXIX.7, p. 213.

¹⁴⁴ Bernard Kangro, *Kuus päeva: Andreas Sunepoja päevaraamat ja pihitimused* ('Six Days: The Diary and the Confessions of Andreas Sunesen') (Lund, 1980, 2nd edn Tallinn, 2006). Interestingly, there is another Estonian historical novel that reveals a similar longing for a non-existent Danish crusading source and presents a fictive diary of Andreas Sunesen: Jaan Kross, *Väljakaevamised* ('Excavations') (Tallinn, 1990).

¹⁴⁵ Kangro, *Kuus päeva*, p. 279.

failed.¹⁴⁶ So Henry was not able to achieve an elevated status, even within such favourable literary circles.

It has only been since the 1990s that authors have started to take an interest in Henry. In the contemporary setting, one meets him quite often, particularly in plays and films: in Endel Nirk's (b. 1925) play *Tabelinus* (1990), in a summer theatre performance *Soolaev* ('Marsh-ship', 2005) and a Monty Python-style parody film *Malev* (2005).¹⁴⁷ These works present rather different images. As *Tabelinus* stresses the moral superiority of the Estonians (also perhaps echoing the mood of the late 1980s and early 1990s), here Henry is still the rather grey side character, a naive justifier of aggression. But 'Marsh-ship' presents a significant alteration to this image. The play was staged in Soontagana and holds as truth the belief that Henry wrote most of his chronicle there. In a saga that unfolds from the Livonian crusades to World War II, Henry as a character was not limited to being the author of his chronicle, but he was made into the love interest of one of the leading female characters. Furthermore, Henry shortly afterwards became a central character in the play *Henrik* ('Henry', 2006) by the journalist, writer and historian Andrei Hvostov (b. 1963). In this provocative work, Henry challenges the nationalist narrative of Estonian history, using his eyewitness authority.¹⁴⁸

These appearances of a figure who had previously been very much in the shadows of discourse also indicate the shift in the Estonian historical *belles-lettres* towards more private stories and marginalized viewpoints. This represents quite a transition when compared to the 1930s, when panoramic narratives and heroes who symbolized their nation dominated the genre. We might also call it another meta-narrative turn, as it presents a more relaxed attitude towards Henry's chronicle. The aforementioned texts and performances give voice to previously silenced figures, including Henry and the native Christians he mentions. The heroism of national symbol figures (such as Lembitu) is, in turn, questioned or even ridiculed, especially in Hvostov's play, *Henrik* and the film, *Malev*. In the film, Henry is mocked as an exaggerated stereotype of a medieval

¹⁴⁶ *Eesti kirjandus paguluses XX sajandil*, ed. Piret Kruuspere (Tallinn, 2008), p. 172.

¹⁴⁷ Endel Nirk, *Tabelinus* (Tallinn, 1990). *Soolaev* ('Marsh-ship') was written by Triin Sinissaar and performed in 2005 and 2006 in Soontagana by Folk Theatre *Loomine* ('Creation'), who mostly perform Estonian and Finno-Ugric folklore heritage. Henry was played by the popular actor Indrek Sammul. The film *Malev* (Estonia, 2005) was directed by Kaaren Kaer. In 1991 there was also staged the first part of the above-mentioned *Tabelinus* trilogy by Ain Kalmus, *Jumalad lahkuvad maalt* ('Gods Leave the Land'), directed by Peeter Tammeaar, Ugala Theatre.

¹⁴⁸ Andrei Hvostov, *Henrik* (Tallinn, 2006). See Linda Kaljundi, 'Tagasitulek isa juurde', *Looming* 10 (2006), 1579–84.



Figure 17.7 Scene from the opera 'Kaupo' at the Estonia Theatre, Tallinn (Estonia), 1932. Composer: Adolf Vedro. Kaupo: Karl Viitol; the Monk: Aleksander Kikas © Estonian Film Archives

chronicler who struggles to record the things taking place around him. It was even advertised with the slogan 'Henry the Latvian lied!' Yet, as it makes fun of the nationalist history and presents the national heroes as dumb barbarians (abandoning the nationalist reinterpretation of the chronicle and sometimes coming quite close to Henry's images of the Estonians as the uncivilized other), a more accurate slogan might have been: 'Henry the Latvian was right after all!'¹⁴⁹

Recent novels touching upon the Baltic crusades illuminate similar tendencies. Some familiar plots have been substantially altered, notably the Henry-based storylines of Estonian boys taken into hostage. Rather than the traditional pattern where the youngsters return to continue the fight against the crusaders, in 2000s fiction they decide to stay in Europe.¹⁵⁰ In addition, Rein Raud's (b. 1961) novel *Kaupo* (1990) brought into focus the archetypical Judas

¹⁴⁹ Linda Kaljundi, 'Malev (Der Trupp), Komödie', *Forschungen zur baltischen Geschichte* 2 (2007), 219–25.

¹⁵⁰ In Tõnu Õnnepalu's *Flandria päevik* ('Flanders Diary') (Tallinn, 2007) the once hostage decides to remain in a monastery in Flanders; and in Tiit Aleksejev's crusade novel *Palveränd* ('The Pilgrimage') (Tallinn, 2008) a similar figure even joins a crusade. See Linda Kaljundi, 'The Historian Who Came in from the Cold', *ELM: Estonian Literary Magazine* 30 (2010), 8–14.

figure. In the Estonian cultural memory, Caupo has traditionally represented the antipode of Lembitu, though his status as reviled figure has not always been so clear-cut. Already in the 1930s there were a few performances seeking to explain his decision 'to join the Europeans'.¹⁵¹ Raud significantly elaborates the character and admits in the foreword: 'Caupo is a sign with a negative meaning. Even though my novel is an attempt to understand this sign from his own perspective, I ask the reader not to forget the historical negativity of Caupo – nor the fact that also we become unambiguous signs despite whether our intentions bear the fruits that during our lifetime we hoped they would.'¹⁵²

In conclusion, the rhetoric of dichotomies appears to have strong survival potential. The Enlightenment effectively reused Henry's presentation of a radical clash of cultures. It also led the way in the national reading of Henry's chronicle and towards the introduction of political and ethnographic interpretations of this text, which used the chronicle as a source for the critique of the crusades and, hence, present social relations, and as a source of folk traditions. As young nations were eager to construct their ancient past, the earliest narrative source of the region quickly obtained a special place in the narratives of national history. Its *topoi* started to circulate in cultural memory and political rhetoric, and the text was introduced to a wider audience. However, nationalist readings of Henry's chronicle have included both acceptance of and resistance to this text. Indeed, many of its stereotypes have been turned upside down, while other elements have also been almost fully adapted and made into symbols of authenticity. Nevertheless, these appropriations have made Henry's chronicle into a device for the creation of hybrid cultural traditions.¹⁵³ And, as the excursion to the Latvian, and above all Estonian, cultural memories has hopefully shown, one should not expect these new traditions to be uniform. They are ambivalent and anxious, full of internal tensions and contradictions. There is no clear and easy way of escaping an identity that derives from the process of negation, differentiation and displacement, relying on the uncomfortable union of the perspective of the

¹⁵¹ The 1937 play 'Caupo' presents Lembitu as a stagnant backcountry patriot and Caupo as the progressive leader of the Livs, 'a proud and vivacious Estonian tribe ... that brought European culture to the Baltics' (cited in Vello Salo, 'Kaupo ja Lembitu ehk Eestlane ja kristlane ehk Paavst tuleb Eestisse', *Postimees*, 10 September 1993). The author of the play was Minister of Economic Affairs Leo Sepp (1892–1942) under the pen name of Rein Sarvesaare. In the season 1932/33 there premiered in the Estonia Theatre Adolf Vedro's opera 'Kaupo' (libretto by Georg Tuksam) which focuses on (and tries to explain) the dramatic moment when Caupo decides that to continue the fight would be hopeless and instead becomes an ally of the crusaders. See Figure 17.7.

¹⁵² Rein Raud, *Kaupo* (Tallinn, 1990), p. 3.

¹⁵³ Cf. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, p. 107.

colonizer and the colonized, as well as the mutilating acceptance of the colonizer's discourse. The same holds for the relationship to its author that makes manifest the double-face and effects of the colonizer: for the young nations, Henry has been at the same time a father and an exploiter, a just ruler and a despot.

The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia: A Selected Bibliography

Compiled by Marek Tamm

Next to the editions and translations of the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia, this bibliography aims to list as fully as possible the research (books, articles, and so on) on the chronicle itself, as well as the studies where the chronicle holds a central place as the primary source. Essays in the present volume are not included in the listing. I am grateful to Carsten Selch Jensen, Martin Jänes, Linda Kaljundi and Anti Selart for their help in compiling the bibliography.

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¹ The translation first appeared in parts in the newspaper *Рижский Вестник* in 1873: Генриха латышского Ливонская хроника, trans. Евграф Чешихин, *Рижский Вестник*, 1873, nos 145, 147, 150, 154, 156, 163, 165, 168, 170, 174, 176, 178, 179, 181, 183, 184–7, 189 (chapters 1–30).

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